"A SMILE A MINUTE"

H. C. WITWER

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BY

H. C. WITWER

AUTHOR OF "FROM BASEBALL TO BOCHES"

ILLUSTRATED FROM DRAWINGS

BY

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Dedicated

TO

MR. VOX POPULI

"YOU MADE ME WHAT I AM TO-DAY,
I HOPE YOU'RE SATISFIED"
— I AM

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FIRST INNING

"A SMILE A MINUTE"

A LITTLE BRIEF AUTHORITY

I

Vivela, France.

DEAR JOE: Well, Joe, I guess by now no doubt you are on your way over to help make the war a success, hey? If you ain't, you should be, because you sure joined the army at a busy time, Joe. You ain't got a idea of what you're missin' by not bein' over here, Joe, it's the greatest show on earth and has been runnin' four years without even missin' a matinee. Also, Joe, as them actor guys says, " we're knockin' 'em dead," hey? I joined the thing as nothin' but one of the chorus, but now they have give me a speakin' part, so you can see they is a great chance of

advancement over here. In fact, Joe, you not only get to the top, but over it!

Well, Joe, can you imagine me bein' a officer? This here war has certainly done a lot for me, and I ain't in no hurry to have it called off. It's handin' me a smile a minute and I figure if it will only last about four more years I will have been promoted to full charge of the U. S. Army, not that Gen. Pershing ain't class or nothin', and I will also have saved up enough dough to retire and never pitch another baseball, except may be for cigars at Coney Island.

As I rumored in my last letter, I am now nothin' less than a full fledge A No. 1 2nd lieutentant and I got these babies salutin' me over here till a innocent bystander would figure I was King of Peoria or the like. The other officers in our company, or I should say *my* company now, hey?, is tickled silly because they can meet me on even terms, where before they couldn't get fa-

miliar with me on account of me bein' a doughboy and them only bein' lieutenants and the like. We are all little pals together now, Joe, and our captain does nothin' but throw out his chest every time he sees me, because he figures he put me over. You and me knows better than that though, hey, Joe?

Well, Joe, I certainly feel sorry for them Germans now, because if I could of did what I done to them guys when I was only a doughboy, what d'ye think I'll be able to do as a 2nd lieutenant, hey? But no kiddin', Joe, I got a swell job and I'm gettin' a great deal more dough. If I told you what my wages was from now on, you would only say I was a liar and then I'd have to knock you cold the minute you landed in France. If I done that, Joe, I understand, it would cost me my job, because a officer ain't allowed to wallop a private and vice verse. I must find out the minute I get a chance who I am allowed to wallop and get

away with it, because a man can't never tell when it might come up.

If we should meet up with each other when you get here, Joe, I'm sorry to say that you will have to be very respectable to me and not call me "Bugs," or "Lefty," or "Ed," etc., or nothin' like that. I am your superior, which of course ain't nothin' new to you, and I have got to be called "sir" and "lieutenant" no matter if we have knowed each other for years. Even if my old man got familiar with me, Joe, I would be forced to throw him in the guardhouse. If you should forget yourself and slap me on the back or the like, well, Joe, they would *start in* by hangin' you at 5 A. M., because we're loaded to the neck with discipline over here.

I have got a swell uneyform now, made to order by a tailor, with a bar on each shoulder and I am all sunburned from standin' in the sun so's the trimmin's will dazzle the eye. I had to buy the whole lay-out out of my own pocket, Joe, and the suit

was only the beginnin'. Joe, a private gets everything free, but I guess they figure a officer is so tickled at gettin' his commission that for about a week he's gonna go around and spend money like water and why shouldn't the government cash on it? The captain gimme a list of the equipment I would need and, Joe, after lookin' it over I figured that the U. S. had signed up for about six more wars after we have won this one and they was gonna keep me on steady to take part in them all. Before I got done shoppin' here and there I have blowed in $400 American money and me only a 2nd lieutenant. I bet Gen. Pershing must of set himself back about $4,000,000, hey, Joe?

Instead of a sword I got a little trick cane which is knowed as a swagger stick and you couldn't maim a gnat with it. The officers ain't allowed to carry swords no more, because it is hard enough as it is to get the Germans to stand up and fight against us

Americans, except when they got ten guys to our one, and if we ever come at them with swords why they would no doubt run all the way to Berlin and we aim to carry 'em in on stretchers. But all comical jokes to one side, Joe, I don't see what good this swagger stick is and if I can't have no sword I would rather carry a bat or somethin', hey, Joe?

Well, Joe, our captain called me to one side the day I got my commission and gimme a long talk on maintainin' discipline and the like. He claims I have got to forget all about whatever friends I got in the company amongst the doughboys whilst on duty and see that I get properly saluted and so forth. Then, Joe, he calls out all of our company which ain't on leave or tryin' out the Red Cross and tells 'em I am now a officer and also how I come to be made one. He winds up by sayin' that any guy which does what I done has got the same chance of risin' from the ranks and when he got

through they was cheers, either for me or the mess which come at that time.

I am goin' over to the quartermaster's department to grab off some things for my new uneyform, when I run into Red McClure which is a corporal and a auction pinochle hound and comin' back from leave of absence.

"Hello, Ed!" he sings out. "How are they comin'?"

"Ed, hell!" I says, standin' very stiff and lookin' stern like nobody but me can, "Come to attention, you big stiff, I am now a second lieutenant!"

"Ha, ha!" he says. "So the squareheads has gone and gassed you, hey?"

Joe, I wanted to bounce one off of his chin, but I remembered that there is one pleasure which is denied me since I have became a 2nd lieutenant.

"Come to attention, Red!" I says, holdin' myself in with the greatest of difficulty, "Or the result is on your own head!"

"You'll prob'ly get the guardhouse when the captain finds you're takin' dope!" he says, and starts to walk past.

Joe, this guy is a old pal, but I have took a oath to uphold the discipline of the U. S. army and what can a man do? They is four doughboys passin' and I yelled out to them. Joe, they come a runnin' and gimme a first class salute, which I give back.

"Take this man's arms," I says, and, Joe, I am as serious as tuberculosis, "Take this man's arms and place him under arrest!"

"Yes, sir!" says the doughboys, all salutin' together like a vaudeville act.

Joe, Red McClure's eyes is poppin' outa his head till you could of hung your hat and coat on either of 'em. The doughboys frisks him of his gun and come to attention again. Joe, they is waitin' for me to give a order what to do with Red and I am up against it. They is no doubt that he has committed a terrible crime by tryin' to kid a officer, but he is also a old pal and I don't

know what to do, on the level. Well, Joe, I stand there thinkin' and I see them doughboys watchin' me close on account of knowin' it's my first day on the job as 2nd lieutenant, so I got to make up my mind quick. These is war times, Joe, and friendship has got to give way to duty, as the guy says.

"Take this bird out and shoot him at sunrise!" I says. "And may the Lord have mercy on his soul!"

Joe, it is a hard thing to do, but discipline has got to be had, hey?

Well, Joe, Red gets as pale as the mornin' milk and the doughboys give a gasp, but I let forth a terrible frown and they march him off without further ado. I felt pretty bad, Joe, because it is a nasty thing to send a fellow man to his death, especially Red McClure which, when I come to think of it, owes me thirty-two bucks from a auction game before I become a officer. The more I thought about it the worse I felt, because

I could hardly go into a guy I had ordered killed and ask for that thirty-two. So, Joe, I went up to the captain and asked him if I could see him a minute.

"What now, Harmon?" he says.

"Well, sir," I says, "they was a guy failed to show me proper respect and the like, so I have him hurled into the guardhouse."

"Quite right!" he says. "We'll have him court martialed and—"

"Thanks!" I says, "but they ain't no need of that, sir — I had him shot!"

"What?" hollers the captain. "You had *who* shot?"

"I ain't one to tell on nobody," I says, "so if it's all the same to you, sir, I won't mention his name. I think he's been punished enough, hey?"

Joe, the captain gimme a glare, but a grin got the best of him.

"Lieutenant," he says, "tell me all about this."

Well, Joe, I did, and before I got through

his face is all red and he's havin' trouble with a bad cough. He walks around the tent with his back to me and I asks him if I can't have Red McClure let off easy this time with about six months in the guardhouse and fined a year's pay or the like, provided he ain't already faced a firin' squad. The captain says he thinks Red is still alive all right, because they is quite a lot of red tape to go through with any more before a man can get executed in the U. S. army on account of Gen. Pershing bein' very strict on havin' everything just so. Well, Joe, I felt very glad to hear that, because I would of always had Red on my mind if they had of shot him on my say so, apart from the thirty-two he owes me. So I asks the captain if I can't have Red let off, because when I come to remember I didn't have my 2nd lieutenant's uneyform on when he failed to salute me and like as not he thought I was kiddin' about bein' a officer.

The captain says if that's the case I can let

Red off with a severe reprimand, whatever that is, and hereafter, before sentencin' guys to be shot, to consult him about it. Outside of that, he tells me again to maintain the strictest dignity at all times, because a officer must let nobody get familiar with him on account of the effect on the men. You know some of them guys would walk up to Pershing and say, "Hello, Gen!" if Red had got away with it on me.

Well, Joe, I got on my full 2nd lieutenant's uneyform fin'ly and I'll tell the world fair I'm a knockout in it! I start over to the guardhouse and by the time I get there I got cramps in my arm from returnin' salutes to doughboys, which has heard what I done to Red and ain't takin' no chances. Red is all gloomed up, and you can hardly blame him when for all he knows he's gonna be led forth and shot. When he sees me in my full uneyform, he give a gasp like all hope is gone and I have come again to reek some more vengeance on him. It didn't

make him feel no better when the doughboys on guard begins salutin' me right and left and only quit when I told 'em, on account of gettin' kinda sick of it.

Well, Joe, I couldn't help feelin' sorry for him when I thought of how close I come to sendin' him to his grave, let alone losin' that thirty-two bucks, so after I have bawled him out to a fare-you-well and made him salute me a few times, I had him turned loose. Joe, he was tickled silly and claims he will never forget me for what I have done. Joe, I don't know whether he meant havin' him thrown in the guardhouse or turnin' him loose, that guy is tricky.

I then go over to see Jeanne, this here million dollar doll which is likewise my *femme,* or as the ig'rant would say, wife. Well, Joe, all the way over whenever I meet any of my old pals amongst the doughboys you ought to of seen them babies look at me in my brand new 2nd lieutenant's uneyform. It was comical to see them start

to holler somethin' at me and then break off short and come to attention when they seen I was a officer, the while lookin' like heavens knows what'll happen next. Joe, it is great stuff to have a lot of guys salutin' you day and night and my chest is out from here to Lenox Avenue and why not?

Well, Jeanne give one look at me and throws herself around my neck.

"*Ma cherie!*" she gasps. "What have they make of you?"

"I am nothin' less than a second lieutenant!" I says, "and, Jeanne, you gotta lay off throwin' your arms around me in public, because it's against the dignity of the U. S. army!"

Joe, with that I takes away her arms, when all the time I would of give my left lung to kiss her, but a officer has got to give up them kind of things.

She backs away and looks at me for a minute without sayin' a word, Joe, only them maddenin' lips of hers is tremblin' like a

rose in a slight breeze and her face gets as white as my collar ought to be accordin' to regulations.

"Edouard!" she says, "Is it then that you love not me, Jeanne — no?"

"Well, I wouldn't go *that* far with it," I says, flicking off a speck of dust from my sleeve. "It's a case of 'I love my wife,' but 'Oh, you commission!' The minute we get in the house, I'll kiss you till you yell for mercy, but in the public eye I gotta be careful, otherwise the privates would run wild. I come near havin' a guy shot just now for not salutin' me and —"

"You would have *me,* Jeanne, *shot?*" she says, her eyes openin' till each one was the prettiest saucer I ever seen in my life, or you either.

"Let us hope it won't come to that," I says, very stern, "but —"

"*Mon Dieu!*" she says and with that she made a funny little noise in her throat and begin to weep.

Joe, as I have no doubt told you before, Jeanne looks better than $500 a week would look to a chorus man, and when she smiles she'd make Rockefeller forget about the oil business. When she weeps — Oh, boy! Say! This dame would make the Kaiser get that trick whisker shaved off, provided she asked for it!

Well, I am only human, Joe, even if a 2nd lieutenant, and I lasted about two seconds, new time. I throwed my arms around her right out loud in public and speakin' about whether I loved her or not — well, we got that all fixed up anyways!

I hope they was no officer higher than me, if that's possible, which seen me and will maybe report me to Gen. Pershing, but if such is the case, Joe, I can't help it. I was married a long time before I was a 2nd lieutenant and discipline or no discipline a guy can't change his habits overnight as the Esquimaux says in Hades.

Well, so long for the time bein', Joe. I

have got to go out now and give some orders right and left so's the doughboys won't forget I'm a sure enough officer. Kindly excuse the blot on the bottom of this letter which was caused by Jeanne leanin' over and kissin' me whilst I'm writin'. Joe, she is so proud of me right now with my new commission and the like, that she wouldn't trade me for peace!

Yours truly,

2nd Lieutenant EDWARD HARMON, A. E. F. (Meanin', "Ain't Ed Fine?")

II

Vivela, France.

DEAR JOE: Well, Joe, I have just got a letter from you and judgin' by the date you must of gave it to a rheumatic snail to bring over. If it takes as long for my letters to reach you as it did yours to get here, you ought to get this one about the time Billy Sunday opens up a gin mill on Broadway. The army mail service will never get pinched for speedin', Joe, but they's no use kickin', I guess them birds has their hands full. Anyways, that's the only thing about the U. S. army which *is* slow, hey, Joe?

I was glad to see you had put some news in your last letter instead of fillin' it up with a lotta stuff about what time you got to go to bed and get up, etc., at the training camp. I have went through all that myself and that

information is about as interestin' to me as the price of tomato sundaes in Shanghai. But, Joe, anything that's takin' place in New York, South Bend or Jackson, Miss., is hot stuff to us over here. We don't care if it's the account of a false alarm fire or whether Broadway is still lookin' like a steal from No Man's Land, on account of them not bein' able to decide whether to run trains or six-day races in the new subway. As long as it's news from the *Etats Unis* we eat it up!

We hear that everybody from the age of reason up to 100 and over has either got to get in the army or grab off a job in a shipyard or the like. Well, Joe, that's fine, but I must say I'm sorry it's gonna ruin the noble game of baseball. I admit them big huskies ain't got no right to cavert around on a lot for money, while us guys is over here tryin' to shut out the Kaiser, but, at the same time, baseball is a good thing over there right now because it helps take people's

mind off of the war and prevents 'em from bein' all gloomed up. Some of them big stiffs they got playin' there now is so rotten that I'll betcha the fans can't think of the war or nothin' else whilst watchin' 'em. But, Joe, I hope they get all them slackers and the like who's motto is "See America First!" and won't come over and give us a hand. They oughta ship over a coupla loads of them I. W. W.'s, and, believe me, them babies would work and we'd make 'em like it! We got a lot of I. W. W.'s over here as it is, only in this here case, Joe, them letters stands for "I Want Wilhelm!" We'll get the big hick, too!

Well, the kiddin' is all over for the day now, Joe, and I'll tell you a couple of things which happened since I last wrote. I have had a fair to middlin' excitin' time, though without gettin' wounded no more or any further promotions, neither of which is my fault.

They is another 2nd lieutenant and me is

sent into Paris again on somethin' special, which they ain't no use in my writin' here on account of the censors all fieldin' .1000. Nothin' gets past them babies, Joe! Well, this other guy has got U. S. R. on his collar, which means "Uncle Sam's Right" or somethin'. He claims he got his commission in Plattsburg, N. Y., and I says I didn't know we was also at war with New York State which never done nothin' outside of goin' Democrat. Then he says they's a officers' trainin' camp there and he was one of the first to graduate. But outside of that, Joe, he's the same as me, only not as good lookin'. You know, Joe, I have got to be such a handsome dog since I come over here and got wed, etc., that even the French colonel which pinned the war cross on me couldn't resist kissin' me, on the level!

Well, this guy asks me if I got my commission at West Point, and I says no, on the *West Front,* and I never been up the Hudson further than 135th Street and then I was

in a taxi. Joe, he looks me over carefully and after that he pays me a great deal of respect, because, Joe, I am a old warrior now and he was just ripe from this Plattsburg place, if they is any such burg.

They was a war's corespondent hangin' around the camp at the time, Joe, and the captain asked us to take him in to Paris with us so's he could get a eyeful of inside stuff to write for the censor to throw away, so we brung this guy along as a mascot. A war's corespondent, Joe, is a sea-goin' reporter which is sent over by a U. S. newspaper to pester the officers, take a chance on his life without gettin' no credit for it and telegraph back the box scores of all the battles. Joe, if they ain't no battles they telegraph back the result anyways, so's to play it safe. Most of the good ones comes right down into the dugouts with us and works just as hard as a soldier, only instead of havin' a gun they got a typewriter.

Well, this bird which come along with

us wasn't a bad guy at all, Joe, and he sure was on the job. He asked us all kinds of questions and we give him all kinds of answers, but if he knowed we was kiddin' him he took it good natured. He claimed he was gonna send his paper a picture of me and a article on what I have did and they would print it, not that I care anything about publicity or the like. Joe, his paper is called the Associated Press and when it comes out with my picture I wish you would get about a hundred copies of it and send one or two each to a list of people I will put at the bottom of this letter. Not that it's anything to me, Joe, but this guy has been a regular feller and I think it's no more than right for me to help him sell his paper. Joe, you better get two hundred copies, because I have just thought of some more guys I want to have see that picture and I hope they spell my name right.

Well, goin' in on the train, Joe, we start to ride this war's corespondent, but he give

back as good as he got. He wanted some inside dope for his paper, so I told him that only the week before we had captured the Crown Prince barehanded and he was now actin' as a waiter for Gen. Pershing. I asked him to swear he wouldn't say where he heard this, because they was savin' it for a surprise and I would no doubt get burnt at the stake if it come out that I give it away. Joe, he looks at me for a minute and then he puts away his notebook and leans over. He whispers that we couldn't of captured the Crown Prince, because just before he left New York the Crown Prince was caught hidin' in the subway at Times Square and they had him on exhibition in Central Park where anybody that bought a Liberty Bond was allowed to throw custard pies at him.

Joe, no doubt this guy was kiddin', but let me know if they's any truth in that, will you?

We fin'ly got into Paris and after at-

tendin' to our business we got a few hours time to kill before goin' back to the pleasin' occupation of makin' the German army sick of lookin' at their uneyforms. The war's corespondent immediately wants to drag us to a joint called the Ambassador's Theatre where accordin' to him they are puttin' on a American show. Well, Joe, I says they is no use of us goin', because they ain't none of us ambassadors, and we're all liable to get throwed out. Besides, I seen these so-called American shows in Paris before and they are the same as the American bars, bein' as much like the United States as Iceland is like Hades. Them guys argued me into it though, and we is ushered into the three worst seats in the house in back of a pole where we couldn't of seen nothin' if we had a X-ray in each eye. The whole thing turns out to be in French and I ain't got no idea of what them actors is ravin' about. I don't think I had nothin' on them, Joe, because they carried on like

they didn't know nothin' about it either. The war's corespondent hisses in my ear that he's satisfied the show is rotten and let's beat it, but this trained officer from Plattsburg claims he knows French like Ty Cobb knows baseball and he'll tell us all about it.

Well, Joe, it didn't improve none with him tellin' it and that ain't no lie! It was all about spies and bullets and killin' Germans and *Vive la France* and the like. We had just come from that and this here shop talk was gettin' on my nerves. I wanted some relaxation and started to go out when the Plattsburg guy which acted like he was a capper for the show or somethin' says to wait for the next act, because they was three guys gonna get killed in it. I says I'll stick if one of the guys is the bird that wrote the show and the war's corespondent lets out a idiotic hee-haw right at a sad part. Well, Joe, we was treated to a lot of hisses and ugly looks and with that we beat it.

When we get outside, Joe, the Plattsburg guy says they is a ball game due to be played outside of Paris between teams from the Y. M. C. A. and the Red Cross and maybe we can get to see that.

"That's if you care anything about the game of baseball," he says to me.

Joe, can you imagine this bird askin' *me* if I care anything about baseball, when I was the biggest thing in it for years?

"I played quite a little at Harvard," he goes on. "Did *you* ever play?"

Oh, boy!!!!!!

"Oh, I can tell second base from the umpire, I guess," I says. "I used to toy with the horsehide now and then myself."

The war's corespondent gets a bad case of the hystericals.

"Ha, ha!" he says. "Why, this is Ed Harmon, the —"

"What was your college?" asks the guy from Plattsburg.

"I went through a lot of 'em," I says.

"The Athletics, Yanks, Detroit, St. Looey, Wash —"

"By Jove!" he butts in, "I *do* remember you now. You used to pitch for the Philadelphia Americans, didn't you?"

Well, Joe, naturally I begin to swell up. Away over here in France they have heard of me pitchin' for the Athletics, even if I only lasted three weeks with them tramps.

"Yeh," I says. "Did you ever see me work?"

"Only once," he says. "It was against New York and the score was tied in the ninth inning with two out, when you came to bat."

"Yes?" I says, stickin' out my chest and motionin' the war's corespondent to move in close so's he won't miss hearin' what a knockout I was.

"Well," says the Plattsburg guy, "you came up and fanned with the bases full and I've never forgotten the way the crowed roasted you!"

Joe, I thought this war's corespondent would die from laughter and I got so sore I would of bust 'em both in the nose if it wasn't against the rules of the U. S. army!

"You never in your life seen me fan with no bases full!" I hollers. "And you *couldn't* of seen me fan when the Athletics had the bases full."

"And why couldn't I?" he says.

"Because," I yells, "in all the time I was with 'em, the Athletics never filled no bases nowheres!"

Well, Joe, that shut him up.

We got a taxi and was drove out in state to where the ball game was carded to take place. Well, Joe, it was some ball park and the guy that laid out the diamond must of bet somebody that a game of ball would never be played on it. If he did, he win easy. The grass was so high in the outfield that it looked like they was only six men to a side, because you couldn't see no out-

fielders once they got in position. Anything hit past third base was good for at least a home run and for all the guy they had as umpire knowed, more.

The game had been allowed to go as far as the eighth innin' when we arrived on the scene and the score was 18 to 15 in favor of the Y. M. C. A. The Red Cross pitcher wasn't so terrible at that. He had a speed ball and a ugly drop, but the support he got wouldn't of kept a movie queen in lip rouge for a week. The guy that was doin' the hurlin' for Y. M. C. A. must of come originally from Borneo, because he was the wildest thing I ever seen outside of a zoo. He walked every other guy that faced him and beaned the ones in between. They was only one ball player on the two teams and that was the guy that arranged the game. He played out in the box office and he admitted to me that he could shut out either of the two teams without no help outside of a catcher. Them guys didn't seem to care

who win the thing and they all acted like the main thing was the exercise.

Me and the Plattsburg guy and the war's corespondent got mixin' around with the Red Cross bunch and it ain't long before it's public property who I am. The Red Cross manager asks me if I would pitch the last innin' for them, includin' comin' to bat because the winner of the game gets the majority of the receipts and they want to make a showin'. If they can prove they's enough interest in baseball over there to get money for bandages and the like, they'll be allowed to play some more games. Well, I says I'm willin' if the Y. M. C. A. will stand for it, and such proved to be the case. I took off my coat and got into a sweater, Joe, and prepared to strike a blow for the Red Cross.

Well, Joe, the first Y. M. C. A. guy that faced me fanned the breeze on two outshoots and somebody must of slipped a horse shoe and a coupla four leaf clovers in his pocket,

because he hit the third ball right on the seam. The pill sailed away up in the air right over third base and would of been a easy out even if a one-armed blind man had been under it and if this infielder would of stood still it would of dropped right in his pocket. But, Joe, this bird is thinkin' what a tough war this is or somethin' and the ball hit the ground in back of him. By the time he has got it where we can play with it again the runner is on second, grinnin' at me like a wolf. I fanned the next two on six pitched balls, Joe, and left this laughin' hyena flat on the bag.

Well, Joe, then we come to bat and the Plattsburg guy says that it's funny, but the only two times he's seen me play ball I was a loser. You know what this did to my goat, Joe, so I says I'll bet him twenty bucks even that we win it. As the Y. M. C. A. had a three run lead on us and only half a innin' to go, this looked fairly safe to him and he takes me up. Well, Joe, I am the

fourth guy in the battin' order and I run over and tell the first three guys up to make the Y. M. C. A. pitcher either walk or bean them, but get on a base somehow even if they have to steal first and then I'll come up and win the thing. I told 'em not to try and hit nothin', because this pitcher was as wild as the Kaiser and would walk 'em all if they waited.

Well, Joe, to show how carefully they obeyed my orders, every one of them boneheads tried to murder the pill and one of 'em even swung twice at wild pitches. They didn't let nothin' go by, but the Y. M. C. A. pitcher was through for the day and they all got on base. The first guy singled, the next one walked and the third beat out a bunt.

Well, there's the bags as full as Sing Sing and none out. I come up to the plate whistlin' gaily and we only need three runs to tie and four to win. As I'm walkin' up, the Red Cross captain tells me not to

hit the pill too hard and try and keep it in the infield. I figured he was kiddin' me and naturally it got me sore, so I picked out the first one over and give it everything I got. Oh, boy!!! Joe, that pill shot on a line right out into center field and went to sleep somewhere in that tall grass I told you about.

Well, they all start yellin' and I flashed around the bags in back of them other three guys like I was goin' for a doctor. Joe, we get four runs and win pulled up, when the umpire runs over to the plate and begins wavin' us back to the bases.

"Foul ball!" he bellers.

Oh, boy!!!!!

"What d'ye mean *foul?*" I hollers. "That was the cleanest hit you ever seen on a ball field! Why—"

"No arguments!" he says. "I'm umpire here. The rules says that any ball hit into that tall grass in the outfield counts as a foul and —"

Joe, the other three guys wags their heads and starts back to the bases.

"That's right!" says the captain of our team. "We only got one baseball and they're hard to get over here. So we made up a rule when we started in that any ball hit into the tall grass was a foul, to keep the players from losing the ball with long hits. I told you to keep it in the infield!"

"You told me to keep it in the infield with three guys on base, hey?" I says. "Don't you wanna win this game?"

"Well, of course, we'd like to," he says with a pleasant smile, "but we can win or lose a ball game most any time, whereas if we lose the *ball,* we can't play any more. Now if you had bunted —"

Joe, just then one of the outfielders comes runnin' in and rushes over to third. These guys that was on the bags has been hangin' around listenin' to the argument and the fielder puts the ball on one of 'em a mile from the bag.

"Out!" hollers the umpire.

The third baseman whips the pill over to second and nails the other guy.

"Out!" hollers the umpire.

Joe, the third guy starts beatin' it for first base, but the ball was there waitin' for him.

"Out!" hollers the umpire. "Game over. Y. M. C. A. wins. You fellows knew the rules and had no right to be off your bases!" He turns to me, "That makes the three outs," he says.

"Four out!" I snarls, throwin' down the bat.

"How do you make that?" he says.

"Them three boneheads and me!" I says. "I'm out, too. I'm out twenty bucks!"

Well, Joe, I paid off the Plattsburg guy which was delighted and the war's co-respondent claims the thing is rich enough to send to his paper. I think I'm entitled to half what he gets for it, hey, Joe, because I was responsible for the play.

On the way back, the Red Cross captain

says if it hadn't of been for me they would of prob'ly win it! Can you beat that?

Yours truly,

2nd Lieutenant EDWARD HARMON.

(Joe, in my next I will tell you about a big battle us and them marines was in and which we win on the bit.)

SECOND INNING

SO THIS IS PARIS

I

Vivela, France

DEAR JOE: Well, Joe, I must say I have had my hands full since my last *billet doux,* which same is high French for letter or I got stung on this here book which is called "French While You Wait." It don't say while you wait for what, Joe, but after lookin' it over I'm satisfied that it means while you wait for the Statue of Liberty and Grant's Tomb to do a jazz together up Broadway. I'm positive that all the French I'll ever learn will never show on me nowheres, and I'm ready to call it a day right now. Of course, I ain't exactly a dummy at that, Joe; I know a few odd words of the French, which is about barely enough

to get me past over here, but look at the advantage it gives Jeanne, which is my blushin' bride and as French as Paris. If we ever get in a argument, not that they's any signs that we will, where do I get off? These here French babies can recite the city directory while you're sayin' knife, and, besides, half the time I ain't got no idea what she's talkin' about. What's the use, then, Joe, of fightin' when you don't know what you're fightin' for, hey? Let the Germans do that — they invented it.

But in common daily conversation, Joe, we get along great. Jeanne speaks broken English and I'm there with crushed French, and between us it may sound like a dog fight to a innocent bystander, but as long as we understand each other, we should worry, hey, Joe?

Joe, this here book on how to talk French is a knockout, I'll tell the world! It must of been throwed together by Irving Berlin and George Cohan or somebody that wanted

to slip the gentle reader a giggle while he was learnin' the language. I will copy off a sample of what I been studyin' and leave it to you. Here's one that's pretty rich:

"L'empereur descendit auprès du banc sur lequel j'étais assis."

Joe, that's the French. I have marked it so even you will know it. This is what the book claims that means:

"The emperor alighted on I where near the bench was sitting."

Oh, boy! Joe, if the emperor had alighted on I, I would of bust him in the nose. He must of fell out of a areyoplane, hey, Joe? But, no kiddin', if I went around talkin' like that, people would figure me nutty and Jeanne would leave me flat. So I have decided to give it up, Joe, for the time bein' and do what the trained officer from Plattsburg, N. Y., told me to do. He caught me red-handed with the book the other day, and he asks me what I was learnin'. I says French, and he says if he was

me, now that I am a newly made officer, he would leave that for dessert and begin with studyin' the *English* language. I suppose they is a joke in that somewheres, Joe, but it's past me.

Well, to get back to how busy I been, everything has been peaches, Joe, and we have did nothin' but fight. What we have did to them Germans, Joe, in the last coupla weeks has been aplenty. We been takin' away towns from 'em over here like a poker shark takes a sucker, and they ain't no race horse on earth could keep up with them squareheads the way they been runnin'. Joe, the Crown's Prince come here to play about a year solid, but, believe me, the German army ain't been playin' nothin' but one-night stands since we went to bat with 'em, and, boy, we got 'em headed the right way at last! I'll lay the world eight to five that this boob in Berlin is wishin' to Heavens right now that Columbus had got sunk by a U-boat before he discovered America, or

that anyways the marines had kept out of the quarrel and left him alone. Joe, when them squareheads started runnin' they didn't take nothin' with 'em that might trip 'em, or the like, and you oughta get a flash at the stuff we grab off in these here burgs. I alone have got enough helmets, bay'nets, bullets, bombs, and the like to go down to one of them South American joints like Mexico and get myself elected anything from vacuum inspector to king.

The bunch of doughboys which is workin' under me, Joe, has made a name for themselves which is the talk of France and no doubt all Europe. Joe, we are knowed as the Roughneck Assassins, and the Germans like us and a drink of carbolic the same way. The colonel has took quite a fancy to me, which is only natural, and, Joe, he had all the toughest birds in the regiment picked out from the different companies and put under me. He claims I was about the only guy which had a chance to handle 'em.

Well, at first, Joe, these birds gimme a little trouble, because they all knowed more about the inside of a guardhouse than Rockefeller does about the oil game. They are all good boys at heart, only none of 'em was raised on cream puffs and raspberry sundaes, and they ain't no doubt about 'em bein' a little wild in their ways. They had the rep of breakin' the hearts of a lotta young officers and they start right in on me. Well, Joe, they couldn't break *my* heart no more on account of Jeanne havin' done that before she wed me, so I stepped right in and went to bat with 'em.

They is a guy called Slugger Weir, which before the Kaiser got smokin' opium used to be a heavyweight box fighter in the good old U. S. A. He was the worst one of the bunch, Joe, and when I give him a order he would present me with a sneer like a wolf and take plenty of time doin' whatever I told him. Mixed with that, he give himself the habit of makin' out he didn't hear me,

and a lotta stuff like that, prob'ly thinkin' on account of his shoulders he'd get away with it. Well, Joe, the rest of them guys would laugh when I wasn't lookin', and one day when I had bawled this Weir guy out I heard him whisper to a pal that I would never open my mouth to him if I wasn't a officer, and he was gonna get me the first chance he got.

Joe, I knowed they was no use throwin' this bird or any of his gang into the guard-house, because they would only come out and start it all over again. I also knowed, Joe, that it was up to me to do somethin' on account of havin' the discipline of the U. S. army on my shoulders. Joe, I thought the thing over all day and fin'ly I made up my mind. I asked the captain if I could take this gang down to a trench which was a little ways from the shot and shell, because they was a tough bunch and I wanted to give 'em a talk. Well, Joe, he looks at me for a minute and then he says: "So they've

turned out to be too much for you, eh, lieutenant?"

"Captain," I says, "it's a rare day when I ask a favor. Lemme do this here which I have just asked, and if them birds ain't eatin' outa my hand to-morrow and sittin' up on their hind legs at a nod I'll turn in my second lieutenant's union card and start in as a private again!"

"Very well," he says after a minute, "go ahead and work it out in your own way."

That was enough for me, Joe, so I rounded up this gang of roughnecks and took 'em back to the place I had picked out. They didn't have no idea what was comin' off, and rumors was runnin' around as wild as rabbits. This Slugger Weir guy kept sneerin' that I prob'ly was gonna treat 'em all to ice-cream sodas, so's they'd lay off ridin' me, or somethin' of the sort. Joe, I heard every word of it, and that was the first and only time I felt sorry for him. Well, Joe, I get 'em all in the trench and then I

took off my second lieutenant's coat and hat and laid 'em down. You should of seen the way them guys crowded around to watch me, Joe. They must of figured I was gonna do some magic tricks or the like for them, and had took off my coat so's they could see they was nothin' up my sleeves. When I got all set, I turns around to this Weir guy and says the followin':

"Look here, you big four-flusher, from now till I put on that coat again I ain't no second lieutenant! I'm nothin' but a doughboy like you. That bein' the case, I'm gonna hand you the worst trimmin' you ever got in your life in full view of the audience. C'mon now and like it — take off your coat!"

Well, Joe, all them hard guys just stands there and gasps, and one of 'em give a cheer, but was shut up by the top sergeant. This here Slugger Weir looks like he can't believe it for a minute and then he grins all over and whips off his coat.

Joe, it was a good scrap while it lasted, but two minutes ain't very long. This Weir guy packs one terrible kick, I'll tell the world fair! It begin to hail fists all around me, and the first thing I know I am flat on my ear, listenin' to the sweet twitters of the birds and the like. No doubt I got a long count, but that ain't either here or there. I got up again and went to it. Well, Joe, I had the same trouble keepin' my chin off this guy's fists again, and took everything he had right on the point. Joe, this time I stayed up, and when I found I could take it I simply sailed into this bird and hit him with everything but a machine gun which was standin' near. Them roughnecks has started by rootin' for him, Joe, but now they are with me to a man. They was enough advice give to me for nothin' to of win the war, let alone this scrap, but I didn't pay no attention to nothin' except tryin' to flatten this guy. Fin'ly he begins to back away, and I put two left hooks to his ear. He

starts to cave in, and I give him everything I got, left, right on the chin. Joe, he went down as cold as ten dollars' worth of ice, through for the day!

"Is they anybody else would like a copy before they're all gone?" I snarls, swingin' around on the gang.

Joe, their answer was nothin'.

"All right!" I says. "Now you guys listen to me. While you're under me, for all you know, me and not Pershing is runnin' the U. S. army. When I give a command I want it done with a snap, get me? If they is any more remarks passed about me while I'm with this outfit, I ain't gonna throw you in no guardhouse where the bullets can't bite you. I'll take you out and beat you up first and then I'll send you in No Man's Land to peddle copies of 'The Star-Spangled Banner' to the squareheads!"

They ain't a word outside of "Yes, sir!"

Well, Joe, Slugger Weir comes back to where he can recognize close friends and

gets to his feet, rubbin' his jaw. He looks around the trench kinda hypnotized and says: "Was they many killed?"

They is no answer, Joe, and he blinks for a minute and I get ready to let him have it again if necessary. He stumbles over to me and I throwed up my guard, but he waves my hands away.

"Don't bother," he says, "I got enough, chief. I'm sorry for what I done and I'll go on the witness stand any time anybody claims you can't hit! What I wanna say is this, lieutenant, I'm strong for you from now on, and I wouldn't moan not even if you put me on kitchen police till Niagara falls." He turns around to the gang and scowls at 'em. "Any of you guys that don't jump when the lieutenant even hurls a glance in your direction has got to take a trimmin' from me!" he says. "As I have already flattened most of you, I guess I can do it without no practice." He looks at me again. "Will you shake hands before you

put on your lieutenant's costume?" he asks, kinda pleadin'.

"Sure!" I says. "And I wish some time you'd show me that left hook of yours — it's a wolf!"

Joe, that guy brightened up and grinned like I had give him one of them Croix de Guerre things.

With that I put on my second lieutenant's coat and hat and swung around. Oh, boy, you should of seen them hands go up to salute! You'd think it was done mechanical!

"Now," I says, "you guys beat it back to your posts; school's over!"

Well, Joe, them guys would do anything in the world for me. You'd think they was fightin' to make the world safe for Ed Harmon instead of the Democrats, now. Before we went into the last big drive, Jeanne come out and talked to 'em and give 'em each a rose she had picked by hand, and that cinched it for me. They called themselves Jeanne's Roughneck Assassins from then on.

I got the best disciplined bunch in the regiment, and nothin' less than the colonel himself has praised me to my face twice for whippin' 'em together in such A-1 shape. Joe, if he knowed I had actually whipped 'em together, no doubt I would lose my swell job and be back with the cheaper help again. The captain says what I have did with these guys is nothin' short of a miracle, and they have had to lay off the hands at the guardhouse on account of it bein' empty ever since. He also wants to know how I done it, and I says that as long as Slugger Weir seemed to have the most influence with them, I had put it right up to him. And that's what I done, Joe, with both hands!

The French went wild over this gang of mine in the last big battle which was near a burg called Cohan, and you know a town named that has got to have a American flag wavin' over it sooner or later. We took seventy-five of them squareheads alive and buried about a hundred more. Slugger

Weir won himself a war cross for takin' a machine gun, crew and all, single-handed, and every one of the rest of them done somethin' almost as good. Jeanne is as tickled with 'em as I am, and I'd rather have this gang under me than be deputy general or the like.

Joe, we lost a few guys in that last big mêlée, which is no more than what you guys back home has gotta expect. You can't make no catchup without bustin' some tomatoes, and you can take it from me that for every guy we lost they was a dozen squareheads put under the daisies. Joe, I suppose a lot of them guys which is gettin' their idea of the war from the newspapers and doin' all their fightin' over gin rickeys and the like is groanin' over the size of our casualty list. Well, Joe, all I gotta say is this: I'd a darn sight rather kiss off while fightin' for my country than die a ordinary death in bed of double-pneumonia or some popular disease like that. We all gotta go in time, and it

ain't every day that a man gets a chance to get in the line-up with all the heroes which has gone to work and give up their lives for their country. They ain't nothin' grander in the world, Joe, and I'll betcha many a mother which is wipin' away a tear somewheres in the U. S. is also throwin' her chest out a mile, too!

As far as that goes, even if you stay at home, Joe, every time you cross the street they's a chance you'll get hit with a auto or the like, so why not come over and die a he-man's death? They used to be a song called "This Is the Life!" Well, Joe, take it from me, this is *the* death. I wouldn't change places with Rockefeller, not that he asked me.

Yours truly,
Second Lieutenant EDWARD HARMON,
A. E. F.

(I have had to lay off tellin' about the battle till my next, Joe, because they ain't added up the hits, runs, and errors yet.)

II

Vivela, France.

DEAR JOE: Well, Joe, I suppose you ain't slept a wink since I claimed I would tell you about the big battle in my last; that's if you got it. No doubt by this time the papers has been full of how we made the Crown's Prince wish his old man had took up parcheesi instead of war and also the way we have run the squareheads ragged. Joe, from the way they was goin' the last flash I got at 'em, some of 'em must be passin' the North Pole by now, if they is any such thing. My ears is ringin' from hearin' "Kamerad!" which is German for "I got enough!" but, Joe, we ain't supposed to know German, and a lot of them squareheads went down below where they come from, still sayin' that Kamerad thing.

Every squarehead I run up against was either married and with nine children in Berlin, or a liar. If they was all tellin' the truth, they is nothin' but single men left in Germany.

Joe, they is one thing over here which gives us a great deal more trouble than the Germans, and that is a alien insect which is called a " cutey." We have always knowed 'em as somethin' else back in the U. S., but over here they go under the name of cuteys. Joe, they sure do like a soldier, and once they make up their minds to bunk with you, Sherlock Holmes couldn't find 'em. The only way you know they are in your midst is when you figure you got the hives. Up to date nobody has invented a sure cure for them things, because once they pal up with you they is true blue and will stick for life. They ain't no use bathin', because they are all Annette Kellermanns when it comes to swimmin', and next mornin' they are right on the job, bright and smilin' and bitin' and

the like. So, Joe, before you come over lay in plenty of powder, and it don't have to be talcum either. Any can that's got "Poison!" on the outside is worth tryin'.

Well, Joe, I have just asked the captain if it is O. K. with him to tell you all about the last big brawl we had in this letter, and his answer was exactly the opposite to yes. So I'll have to save it for a while yet. However, the war's corespondent was right here on the job, and no doubt you will be able to read some of it in the paper which took a chance and sent him over here. The name of it is the Associated Press, and I hope you have got a copy of it with my picture in it, and is it any good?

While I'm waitin' to give you the inside dope on this here Made in America drive I'll tell you what a time we had gettin' outa Paris that time I pitched sterling ball for the Red Cross and got gyped outa twenty bucks, not to say losin' the game through trickery and foul play. Me and the war's corespond-

ent and the trained officer from Plattsburg strolls up and down the boulevards after the game that night to our heart's content, and the way them swell dames looked us over was enough to turn anybody's head. Of course they didn't bother me, Joe, because I am a married man, and, apart from that, Jeanne has got it forty ways on any dame I, you, or anybody else ever seen. They's only one woman in the world that looks as good to me right now, and that's the Statue of Liberty, Joe.

Well, the first thing you know, the trained officer from Plattsburg quit lookin' at the girls and takes a slant at his wrist watch and practically at once he says: "Heavens above! We're up against it now!" in a loud voice, the while gettin' pale.

"You said somethin'!" says the war's co-respondent. "That blonde over there can have anything I got, outside of my passport!"

"Shut up!" says the Plattsburg guy.

"No woman could get us out of the mess we're in now if she were Helen of Troy!"

"Where d'ye get that Troy stuff?" I says. "They's better-lookin' dames in Albany and Syracuse than Troy ever seen. Why —"

"Both of you idiots are enough to drive a thinkin' man crazy!" butts in the Plattsburg guy. "It's all right for this alleged reporter, but you and me are facin' perhaps twenty years in Leavenworth, if not a firin' squad!"

"I told you to lay off of this *vin ordinaire,*" I says. "This here French booze is brutal and —"

"What's the trouble?" butts in the war's corespondent.

"Trouble?" howls this trained officer. "It's half past eight o'clock and we've missed the last train to our base. We were due to report to the captain at midnight. You know what that means in war time, don't you? My career is ruined!" He moans.

"Maybe you can get a new one at the quartermaster's," I says. "They got a lotta fresh stuff in last week."

The war's corespondent treated himself to a laugh and then he says:

"Listen! If he's on the level with that missin' the train thing, you guys are up against it for real. They give a guy ten years only last week for overstayin' his leave."

"Well, I can't help it," I says. "Let's telegraph the captain that we have got sick, hey?"

"That's the best idea you ever had in your life — probably the only one!" says the Plattsburg guy. "Only we'll have to prove it."

"All right," I says. "They's a American ambulance around here somewheres and we'll get the medico to give us a note that —"

"Don't waste time talking about it!" butts in the Plattsburg guy. "Let's go!"

Well, Joe, we grabbed a taxi, and in less than no time, or about a hour to be exact, we wind up outside a American hospital. A guy dressed like a Coney Island head waiter, or, in other words, wearin' a white coat and pants, comes out when we ring.

"What do you guys want?" he says.

"Practically nothin'," I tells him. "It seems to have got by you, but we're a couple of American officers, this guy bein' no less than a Plattsburg graduate. We have went and missed our train back to the base and we'd like to stay at your hospital till to-morrow, so's it'll look like we was sick."

"You wanna stay here to-night?" he says.

"If I could guess like you," I says, "I'd make a bet on when the war's gonna end and give any man odds."

"Humph!" he says with a sarcastic snort. "You got another guess comin'. This here's a hospital, not a hotel. Good night!"

"Wait!" I says. "Be a good feller.

Give us somethin' so's we can claim we're sick."

"You wanna get sick?" he says, attemptin' a smile and missin' it.

"Right," I says. "That's why we come to a doctor."

"Step inside," he says. "I know you guys is kiddin' me, but I got a hunch I can fix you up."

Well, Joe, we all went in, and on the way down to the abattoir part of the hospital we passed a lot of Red Cross nurses. Joe, these dames all come from the U. S., and they must of been hand-picked, because any time any of 'em got sick of the smell of chloroform she could go right to work in the Follies and Ziegfeld would break his neck to sign her up. The war's corespondent says he would give a arm to stay there a week, and I says why not have his head cut off and be done with it, because there's somethin' he'd never miss.

Joe, after lookin' these here nurses over I

know why them young doctors spends four years in a hospital before hangin' out their own sign. If it was me, I never would go in business for myself at all!

Well, the doctor comes out with three glasses of somethin' and hands 'em around. I took a smell of mine and would of died right then and there if I had of had a weak heart.

"Listen!" I says. "If you got any drinkin'-carbolic acid, I think I'd rather have a shot at that. This stuff don't go!"

"Drink it down," he says. "Be a man!"

"Sure!" says the war's corespondent, throwin' his in a cuspidor with a quick twist of his hand. "It ain't nothin' but a little nux vomica."

"Yeh," I says, "I'll prob'ly do that all right the minute I get outside of this stuff. I didn't wanna croak. I only wanted to get a certificate that I'm sick."

"Drink it down," says the doctor, while a

nurse lured me on with a vampire grin. "And I'll guarantee you the certificate!"

"Com'on, then!" I says to the Plattsburg guy. "Here's a go!"

Joe, we swallowed this stuff, and, oh, boy! While we was reelin' around the ward the doctor give us the certificates and we was showed the way out. Joe, we was the same as Chaplin to them nurses, and I could hear their wild laughter long after we got in the street.

"What now?" says the Plattsburg guy, rollin' his eyes and holdin' his stomach, like he had heard somebody was gonna try and steal it away from him.

The war's corespondent sits down on the curb and begins to shriek with laughter.

"Oh, lady!" he hollers. "The only thing the matter with this story is that nobody will believe it when I cable it over. If I could only use you guys' names!"

"Heavens, I feel terrible!" moans the Plattsburg guy.

"I figure we didn't get enough," I says. "Let's go back and get another shot of that stuff before it's all gone. Maybe we can get so sick that we won't have to prove nothin' by talkin', hey?"

"Look here!" says the war's corespondent. "A joke's a joke, but this has gone far enough. I know enough about military procedure to know that if you boys don't report to-night it's gonna break tough for you. I think I can get hold of a guy here which will drive us by auto as far as the base, if you'll both chip in to pay him. This bird will come high, but —"

"For the love of Heaven, then, get him!" hollers the Plattsburg guy. "I'll pay anything he wants!"

"Wait here," says the war's corespondent, "and don't go and croak on me while I'm gone, because then this guy will put the bee on me for about ten francs for bringin' him over. If you had any brains, you wouldn't of drunk that stuff!"

In about twenty minutes, Joe, he rolls back in a auto which was prob'ly all the rage when Grant took Richmond. The motor sounded like a air raid and the driver looked like the victim of one. However, Joe, it was no time to get fussy, so we all climbed in. The chauffeur of this thing goes around in front and starts crankin' it up. If he throwed that crank around once, he done it a hundred times, and all the motor did was moan like somethin' was dyin' a horrible death under the hood. All at once he got it right. Oh, boy!!! Joe, they is a terrible explosion and he fell about ten feet away with the crank still in his hand. People which was passin' run for cover, and a horse hitched to a cab started for Fort Worth. But, Joe, the motor was turnin' over and the chauffeur gets up and comes back grinnin'.

"*Viola!*" he says. "What would you? I cannot help zat. Always Marie she give the small keek back. It is so droll, *n'est ce pas?*"

"Who's Marie?" I says, not seein' no dames in the neighborhood.

"That's what he calls this boiler," says the war's corespondent. "Don't say nothin', he speaks English, and he's liable to get sore."

"I'm dumb!" I says.

"I found that out long ago!" remarks the Plattsburg guy.

Well, Joe, believe me, that was some ride! I'll tell the world that Paul Revere's dash was a exercise gallop alongside of the wild way we fled through Paris and out into the open country. This here Marie was *some* car, and it only goes to show you can never judge nothin' from appearances. Take a crab, for instance — the first time I seen one I tried to squash it with my foot.

Along round eleven o'clock, Joe, it looked like they was no chance of us makin' the base in time, on account of Marie stakin' herself to a blowout and guys guardin' the road stoppin' us every seven inches. This

chauffeur had plenty of monkey wrenches and the like with him, but no extry tires, and as none of us was in the habit of carryin' them around, we was stuck. To make it excitin', the Plattsburg guy offers the chauffeur fifty bucks extry to take us along on the rim, and I leave it to you whether we went away from there or not. For fifty bucks this guy would of blowed up the Louvre and furnished his own bomb.

Well, Joe, in another hour we are out on a road which the Germans is showerin' with attention and shells, and shrapnel bust around and over us like hail. We are a hour late and the Plattsburg guy is moanin' about what's gonna happen to us and he's got it doped that they would start in by shootin' us. We slewed around a turn and there's another car turned over on its side. We almost run into it and would of, if I'd been drivin', but our chauffeur missed it by dumb luck. A coupla sentries or the like jumps out from behind it and hollers for us

to halt. We did that by simply runnin' into a ditch.

A coupla French officers comes runnin' over and we gotta show them everything on us but a mole I had on my right shoulder. Then these guys claims they got nothin' less than a general with them and he's gotta get to headquarters right away. They says a shell put their bus on the bum and it was lucky we come along. They didn't say lucky for who, but from the way them shells was bustin' up the road, I'd say it was lucky for the Germans. They didn't ask us if we'd take this here general; they simply says make room. Well, Joe, I stole a look at the general, and it wasn't Pershing, but some French bird, and I thought the Plattsburg guy would throw his arm out salutin' him. I give him one wave and let it go at that.

Well, Joe, the general sits as straight and stiff as a poker and the Plattsburg guy keeps lookin' at him like he never seen one before in his life. The war's corespondent nudges

me a coupla times and wags his head at the general and he hisses that he's got a peach of a story, but that don't mean nothin' to me. Joe, I figured the both of them is kiddin' me and it got me sore, so I says to the general:

"Well, this is certainly a fierce night to be out in, hey?"

Joe, he looks around at me for a minute and then he smiles.

"*Oui,*" he says.

Joe, that means he figured I was right.

The Plattsburg guy acts like he'd gone nutty. He crowds me over in a corner and claps his hand on my mouth. The war's corespondent shoved a handkerchief in his own.

Well, Joe, in less than a hour more we was at the base, only a mere two hours late, and we ain't no more than hopped outa the car when we run plumb into the captain. They ain't no smile on his face.

"Ha!" he grunts. "Both you men are

under arrest. Corporal of the guard!" he sings out.

Joe, it looked bad.

Out steps this here French general, and the captain gasps and salutes him seven times by my count. They talk in French for a while, and I see the war's corespondent begin to grin.

"You guys must of been born in a bed of horseshoes," he says to me. "The general has told the captain that you brought him all the way here under fire and rendered valuable aid. For all I know you may grab off a cross!"

Well, Joe, we didn't get no cross, but after the French general left, the captain turns to us and grins.

"Go to your quarters," he says. "Just make out a formal report of the reason you were late and hand it to me. You will be cited for what you did to-night. Good night!"

"Gimme a cigarette!" I says to the war's corespondent. "That there French general must be a good guy — he certainly give us a out anyways. What's his name?"

"Foch!" he says.

Yours truly,

Second Lieutenant EDWARD HARMON.

(Joe, I will give you the dope on the big battle in my next. That Foch guy's got charge of the war; we was lucky, hey?)

THIRD INNING

IT'S A BOY

I

Vivela, France.

DEAR JOE: Well, Joe, as long as I promised you in my last letter that I would slip you the inside dope on the big drive we are pullin' off over here, I will try and do the same in this if the censor don't gimme the worst of it. No doubt you are folleyin' the thing up over there in the newspapers, because they is more war's corespondents over here now than they is dampness in the ocean and they are all writin' like mad about the wonderful sights they seen and quite a few they didn't. They must be a lot of money sellin' papers, hey, Joe, when they can afford to send them birds over here and pay their expenses and the like for a orches-

try seat at the biggest show on earth. Besides that them babies is drawin' down big money, Joe, even if you cut what they claim they get in half. I think when the war's over I will get in this writin' game myself. You know, Joe, that my cousin Larry Roth used to write for a livin', so it's in the blood. Of course he was a shippin' clerk and wrote most of his novels on the sides of crates and the like, but still he might of done better if he would of had a little more ambition and a little less thirst.

Joe, one of these typewriter fiends claims he's gettin' twenty-five cents a word, and I asked him which word he got the quarter for and he got sore. But most of them is good guys, Joe, especially the bird that's workin' for the Associated Press and will have my picture printed in it at least once if he ain't a liar.

This guy has left most of his wages over here by way of crap games, poker, and the like, but he's the gamest loser I ever seen,

outside of Belgium. If he can't write no better than he can gamble, he must of paid his own way over and he'll have to do the Australian crawl all the way back. You can't drive this baby out of no pot, Joe, no matter if he's got nothin' but a pair of deuces, and when he gets three of a kind he goes crazy and bets like he had the Liberty Loan in back of him. Last night he asked me would I reel off some of my adventures to him, because he was short of stuff for his paper. Well, Joe, that's like askin' Mary Pickford does she want her picture taken, because all I been doin' for weeks is pacifyin' them war's corespondents with stories and the like. So I says to let that part of it go and come over to a little game of stud which we had got up and which I figured would turn out to be nothin' less than a benefit for *me,* because I am a wolf with the pasteboards, not crooked but lucky.

Well, Joe, this guy says poker is his middle name, and I says that don't mean nothin',

because I knowed a guy once named Charlie Cash which never had a nickel, and they's many a guy named Baker which never seen a oven in his life. Joe, he says are we gonna kid or play cards, and I says I don't care which, because he gimme the same amount of laughs either way. Before he could think of a comeback, not being snappy like me, we are in the dugout where the gamblin' is to be had.

Joe, they is a young medico there named Goldstein, and he says let's play stutz poker because it's quicker and maybe we can get through before the Germans starts in bombardin' us with their horowitz guns. The war's corespondent develops a case of the hystericals while askin' him if he don't mean " howitzer " guns and what kind of poker is " stutz "? A box-fightin' tourney was prevented by the greatest of difficulty, Joe.

Well, Joe, we start in with draw poker, and the moon's the limit. This war's corespondent pulled out a roll that no greyhound

on earth could jump over, and I was thinkin' how Jeanne would do nothin' but giggle when I handed it to her. Joe, in a hour they is only him and me and another guy left in the thing, and all of a sudden I get dealt a full house, aces up, cold. It was the first respectable hand I had grabbed all night, and, controllin' myself with the greatest of difficulty, I opened the thing up. Joe, they all stayed. Well, from the way the bettin' went back and forth for a coupla minutes, a innocent bystander would figure we was playin' with a pinochle deck and the least anybody had was four aces. Fin'ly I think they's enough dough in the pot to keep Jeanne laughin' for a month and here's *one* I cop, and who wouldn't with three aces and two kings? I raised the war's corespondent twenty bucks, and if he flicked a eyebrow, Joe, I didn't see it. The other guy decides they ain't no use of playin' cards forever, and he eases out of it. The war's corespondent says his paper told him to stay with the sol-

diers while he was over here and he raises me back. I got him figured for three queens or the like, knowin' how he always played, and I kick it again. He gets yellah and calls. Well, Joe, he had the three queens all right, but they was another one with them, and if I had that hand I would of been bettin' yet. Joe, I quit the game without nothin' but my uneyform, and I guess it's my own fault for tryin' to take a boob. I am sick and tired of gamblin' and will never lay hold of another card, unless maybe a little auction pinochle or black jack or the like.

Joe, when the mail come in this mornin' the war's corespondent got a letter, and after readin' it he tells me his brother has attracted the attention of the draft board and will soon be in our midst. He says his brother went up to be examined while whistlin' "Hello, Central, Give Me No Man's Land!" and the draft guys obliged him right away.

Well, Joe, I'm writin' this letter in one of them Y. M. C. A. huts, and a guy has just gimme the information that the captain wants to see me, so I gotta lay off the ink. No doubt you are sore because I didn't tell you nothin' about the battle like I promised, but they is so many other things to attract the attention over here that a guy keeps forgettin' about the war, on the level!

Yours truly,

Second Lieutenant EDWARD HARMON.

(Hurry up over, Joe, or they won't be no squareheads left to holler "Kamerad!" at you.) Ed.

II

Vivela, France.

DEAR JOE: Well, Joe, I have just got your letter sayin' you expect to leave any day now for France. You can stop there if you want on the way *back,* Joe, because it's a fine country, but if you wanna see *us,* you'll come right straight to Berlin! The way we are travelin' now, Joe, we will all be sayin': "So this is the Kaiser?" in a coupla more weeks. We shooed them squareheads outa four more burgs yesterday, and they are still gallopin' back to Germany, wishin' to Heavens they had never heard tell of no Crown's Prince, Von Hindenburg or "Gott."

Joe, when you come over, don't do like one of them new draft guys done. This here was a little guy from Syracuse or some-

wheres out West, and he got sore because he claimed he ain't done nothin' but dig trenches since he been in the army, and the only thing he dreams about at night is picks and shovels. He says if he wanted to of done that he could of enlisted with the guys which is tryin' to build the subways in New York, and they would of give him more money and let him go about his business when his day was up. The top sergeant catches him stallin' and bawls him out, and this guy throws down his pick and hollers: "If you don't like the way I work, gimme me money and fire me! I'm sick of this job, anyways. I come over here to kill Germans and not to supply France with a sewer system for a buck a day. Pay me off; I'm through!"

Well, Joe, this bird is now in the guardhouse thinkin' it over, and, oh, boy, what they done to his pay envelope!

So, Joe, no matter what you are told to do or how useless and nutty it sounds to you,

they is only two words that you wanna say, and them two is "Yes, sir!" They got plenty of guys in the army whose job it is to do nothin' but think, and your job is to do what they tell you. If you figure you're gettin' the worst of it, you can moan to the captain afterward, but *first* carry out whatever order you are give, no matter if some young second lieutenant tells you to walk out in No Man's Land and see if you can juggle six eggs, not that they ever will.

The worst crime in the U. S. army, Joe, is givin' a officer a argument, and they ain't got no mercy on you when you do the same. And, Joe, don't kid yourself with the idea that if the captain comes up and asks you are you feelin' O. K., and the like, you can go around the next day and say: "Hey, cap, slip me a cigarette!" Joe, if you done that, they would no doubt send to New York for the electrical chair and give you a chance to sit in it. They has got to be ample discipline or the army would get all balled up

and beat themselves like Russia done. One of them war's corespondents which was with the Russian army till he got sick of runnin' tells me the reason Russia had to quit for a while. He says after they had throwed the Czar away the army went crazy. If a general would give a order to advance on the Germans, all the privates would get sore and hold a convention on the battlefield to see whether they would advance or shoot the general for givin' the order. They claimed what right had he to order them around when they was all brothers now and a general was the same as a buck private.

Well, Joe, I was knockin' Russia the other day for walkin' out right at the seventh innin', and one of them trained officers from Plattsburg says I ought to lay off, because Russia was having her hands full at home tryin' to become a republic. Joe, I says what right has Russia got to go Republican when we are all fightin' to make the world Democratic—am I right? Joe, he says any-

thing that's told to me goes right in one ear and out of the other, because they ain't nothin' in between to stop it.

Joe, we have took thousands of them Germans prisoners, and we got to feed them big stiffs regular, and they eat like pigs, as much and as noisy. They was so glad to get captured and released from the war that they cried with simple joy. Some of 'em told us that they hadn't seen no food or the like for days and they was full up to the neck with the war and the Kaiser, not to mention the Crown's Prince, which they claimed was a idiotic lowlife. So you see, Joe, their morality, as the official daily comics calls it, is all shot to pieces.

This here Slugger Weir, which I had to beat up some time ago, captured seven squareheads barehanded, and he was marchin' 'em up and down our trenches so's everybody could see 'em and makin' 'em holler: "To hell with the Kaiser!" and "The Germans iss no goot!" when the top sergeant

came along and ordered Weir to take 'em to the captain. Well, Joe, Weir takes 'em down there, and then he hangs around outside for about a hour till the captain comes out and asks him what he's waitin' for.

"I want them squareheads of mine, sir," says Weir.

"Your prisoners have been escorted to the rear," says the captain. "And I must congratulate you, Weir. You'll be well rewarded for —"

"Who took them guys away?" yells Weir, so excited he forgot who he was talkin' to.

"That will do," says the captain, frownin'. "You may return to your post."

"But look here, captain," says Weir. "Them seven guys belong to me! I got 'em all by myself, and they —"

"It's all right," says the captain. "They are safely guarded, and if —"

"That ain't the idea, sir," butts in Weir, lookin' disgusted. "I thought when a guy

captured one of them bums he was allowed to keep him. I wanted to bring one of them babies home with me and show him to my girl!"

Joe, the captain fled into his tent so's Weir wouldn't see him laughin', but you could of heard him a mile away.

Joe, them squareheads hates to be took prisoners by the Canadians on account of what them rats done to some Canadian wounded they took. Joe, you will no doubt hear about it when you come over, but I can't tell it to you here, because every time I think about it I feel like goin' over to where we got our prisoners and bumpin' off a dozen of 'em for luck! Joe, no gunman from the East Side would do the stuff them guys does, and it don't make no difference if the poor devil they got hold of is a man or a woman. Well, anyways we're killin' 'em off pretty fast now, but it's clean killin', Joe, done in the heat of battle and not in no hospital in Germany.

Well, Joe, the big drive started off when we was sandwiched in between the marines on one side and a colored outfit on the other. Oh, boy, but them colored babies can scrap! Joe, they can fight without no gun if they had to. A club, bricks, a razor, shovel, anything, even their bare fists is good enough for them. Just before we went to it, one big buck from down South somewheres which has been actin' kinda nervous suddenly hitches up his pants and drags out a knife as big as Chicago and says to the guy beside him:

"Well, buddy — fare thee well. Ah'm gonna git me mah German before they's all gone!"

Joe, with that he starts to climb up over the trench all by himself, and almost got over before a sergeant yanked him back. He was the most surprised guy in France, outside of the Crown's Prince, and he claims he thought once he got in the trenches it was every man for himself and they was no use

hangin' around doin' nothin', especially as he was feelin' about right.

There was another colored guy, Joe, which run into a squad of squareheads when we crashed into a town. The squareheads dropped their guns and begin yellin' "Kamerad!" and the colored guy tells 'em to go to hell and begins plowin' 'em up with a automatic. A officer come along and pulled him off, askin' him what he meant by shootin' at men which wanted to surrender and had proved it by yellin' "Kamerad!" at him.

"Boss," says this guy, "Ah didn't know that's what they meant. Ah don't speak that there talk of theirs nohow, and Ah thought they was callin' me 'niggah' in German!"

Joe, if you could ever see the difference between the way our boys scrap and the way the Germans goes about it, you'd almost be able to guess when this quarrel will be over. The squareheads ain't no good at all when

it comes to this hand-to-hand thing, and many's the time we seen their officers *kickin'* 'em outa the trenches. Give a squarehead a machine gun and ten friends with him and he'll give you a battle, provided you don't get too ferocious with him. The minute the odds is even, he resigns. But, Joe, our gang goes into the thing yellin' and singin', and it don't make no difference how warm the scrap gets, it's turkey to them. Why, Joe, when they get hit you gotta almost chain 'em in the hospital, or they'll sneak out on the doctors and get in it again.

Well, Joe, the second day of the drive I get ordered to take twenty men and clean out a machine-gun nest which was givin' us trouble and was so camouflaged up that the artillery couldn't do nothin' but miss it. I called for volunteers and give the captain a last fare-thee-well note to Jeanne, because a officer's gotta lead his men, Joe, and they is a lotta jobs like bookkeepin' and the like

which is healthier than this was. I could of had ninety guys if I wanted, but I picked out the twenty from this tough bunch of mine, and we went to it. We crawled along the ground flat like snakes, hopin' for the best, and if not we can't help it! These doughboys was kiddin' with each other, and whenever a bullet would pass near they was a guy from Brooklyn which would keep callin' to the others: "Stop duckin' 'em. You guys is all yellah!"

Well, pretty soon, Joe, this machine gun got us ranged, and, oh, boy, they was more lead begin to fly around us than they used at Gettysburg. Joe, I kept crawlin' ahead and encouragin' 'em on, but they didn't need no encouragement. Joe, from the way they was kiddin' with each other you'd think we was off to steal some apples or somethin'. One guy says: "Well, we are up against it now, and I only hope the nurse *I* draw is a good looker!" Another guy stops one with his arm, and while I'm givin' him first aid

he grins and says he hopes it don't heal up on him before he goes home and is they any way of makin' it leave a scar, so's he'll have somethin' to show the folks! Joe, them's the kind of babies which is makin' the French guys holler *"Vive les Etats Unis!"* and the Germans holler "Kamerad!"

Joe, by the time I had located the gun I only had eleven guys with me outa the twenty I started out with, and we come onto it at a angle about four hundred yards away. I made up my mind to rush it and give the command. Joe, them guys would try to take Boston with sling shots if I asked 'em, and you oughta see us cover that ground, spillin' lead as we went.

Well, Joe, I guess the squareheads was so surprised at seein' us spring from the ground, when they figured they had us wiped out, that for a minute they couldn't do nothing. Joe, every one of them guys I had with me can shoot like Caruso can sing, and we got seven of 'em before they could

get us in range again. Then we piled in on top of 'em with the bay'net.

Joe, it was all over in about five minutes — that is, all over as far as the squareheads was concerned — and I left the machine gun in charge of a corporal and two men, which immediately proceeded to turn it loose on the Germans. Well, Joe, I started back to report the gun captured and see what my casualties is, and with all the yellin' and shootin' goin' on it was almost as hard goin' as it is on Broadway when the theatre crowds comes out. I must of lost my way in the traffic, because the first thing I knowed I run into a coupla ounces of soft-nosed lead which knocked me kickin' with a hole in my hip you could drive a bus through.

After about six years or six minutes, Joe, I ain't sure which, I come to life again, and there is a big squarehead standin' over me ready to gimme the bay'net. He give a growl when he seen me tryin' to get up, and

after feelin' for my gun and findin' it was gone, I says:

"All right, squarehead — you win! What are you figurin' on doin' with me?"

Joe, this guy dumfounds me by speakin' English.

"Iss you a officer?" he says.

"What do I look like, a chorus girl?" I comes back.

"Dot's enough!" he says. "You iss a brisoner, und don't got funny mit me, Americaner! Vy do you fight us?"

"You don't think we come all the way over here to shoot crap with you guys, do you?" I says. "Hurry up and get through with the civil-service examination; I'm hit!"

"*Hein!*" he says, bendin' over me. "You iss bleeding! Der orders iss to take no brisoners, bud I — if you iss a officer, dot's something else. If I take you to der *Oberlieutnant,* I vill ged a veek in Berlin. Vot iss your rank?"

"I'm a admiral!" I says. "Pretty soft, eh?"

"Vot iss a admiral of the navy doing avay oudt here?" he says. "Dot sounds funny to me!"

"Well, I can't help it," I says. "I got tired of life aboard ship."

Joe, he looks me over for a minute, and then he lays down his gun and drags out my first-aid kit. In a coupla minutes he had fixed me up and done a pretty good job too. I thought it was funny for a squarehead to show any signs of bein' human after what I seen them do before, and I looked this bird over pretty careful. Joe, his face was familiar, but I couldn't figure just where I'd seen him before. When he got done with the bandages, he takes out a knife and cuts all the buttons off my coat and also takes my shoulder bars and the letters from my collar. He wraps all this stuff in a cloth and puts 'em inside his coat, and I could have strangled him while he was doin' it and would

of, but not after he had gone and bandaged up my wound, hey, Joe?

Then he says I can rest a few minutes before he starts me for his commander, and while we're sittin' there I took a chance and asked him what he thought about the war. Well, Joe, I never seen a simple question create such a sensation before! He jumps up and begins shakin' his fist and cuttin' loose with a string of German, and I caught the name of "kaiser" every now and then, but outside of that he might of been singin' grand opera for all I know. I asked him would he mind speakin' English, because all the German I know is "Kamerad!" and he sits down again and begins to talk like he'd been lookin' for this chance for years.

First he claims that all Germany is fed up with the war and would quit in a minute, if they wasn't scared silly of the Kaiser and them guys. He says that guys is desertin' by the wholesale and they has been several mutinies in the field because they don't get

nothin' to eat. Then he says that they was told the U. S. couldn't get no men over here on account of the U-boats sinkin' all our ships, and here everywhere he looks he can see nothin' but Americans, and, oh, lady — how they can fight! He winds up by sayin' that when we begin the first rush of this drive, half of his regiment had been wiped out in ten minutes by the marines and he wished to Heavens he was back in New York again.

Joe, when he says "New York," I jumped up and liked to bust off the bandage!

"What do *you* know about New York?" I hollers.

"*Hein!*" he says. "And vy nodt? I vorked dere ten years already mit only the best hotels, und —"

"Wait!" I yells, buttin' in. "I got you now! You used to be a waiter at the Knickerbocker, am I right? I knowed I seen you somewheres. I'll betcha I can even call your name — Fritz, ain't it?"

"*Himmel!*" he gasps. "Dot iss right! Und you?"

"I'm Ed Harmon, the pitcher," I says. "Remember me takin' you out to the Polo Grounds that day you was off and showin' you your first ball game? Remember me makin' the Cubs throw away their bats and you win twenty bucks or somethin' like that? And I got another one that cinches it. Remember the scrap I had with you about that caviar stuff? You brung it in on a piece of bread, and I says *nobody* would eat no mess like that and claimed you had prob'ly dropped the bread on the floor?"

Joe, his face gradually brightens up and he slaps his leg and grins. "Vell, vell, vell!" he says. "Chust think of dot now! Of course now I know who iss idt. Nobody efer could fight all the time mit the waiters like you, und nobody efer could tip like you eider! You iss dot baseballer. Vell, vell, vell! Und how iss everything by you now, Mister Harmony?"

With that, Joe, he bends over and rubs his hands together just like he used to do at my table in the Knickerbocker, and all he needed was a towel on his arm to complete the picture. Can you imagine this bird askin' me how they was comin' with *me,* when he had took me prisoner and I was wounded!

"By me," I says, "everything is rotten just now, but things is lookin' up. Help me get up outa here!"

Joe, I get up, and if this guy don't brush me off and hand me my hat with a bow I hope I never lay a eye on Broadway again!

"Und der wound," he says, still bowin' and rubbin' his hands like it was a steak he was talkin' about. "How iss dot?"

"Just right!" I says. "Only I'd like to have some more potatoes with it. Fritz, the service was fine, but the only tip I can give you is to tell you to get outa this here war as quick as you can. You guys ain't got a

Chinaman's chance, and if I was you I'd throw away my gun and quit!"

"Ach!" he says. "Vouldn't I like to!" He thinks for a minute and then he says: "Mister Harmony, if I vas took brisoner by the Americaners, vould I eadt vunce alreadty?"

Joe, my heart give a jump! Opportunity ain't never knocked at my door and found me out playin' pinochle.

"You sure would, Fritz!" I says. "Now listen. You got enough of the war, and here's a fine chance for a out. Gimme that gun, and I'll take you back to our lines and give you a feed. You'll be took care of and nobody will bother you with bay'net and bullets, unless you try to make a get-away. Think of it! Three square meals a day, a clean place to sleep, and no American bay'nets to duck. Why —"

"Und maybe I could vait on der chenerals!" he butts in. "Here, Mister Harmony — here iss my gun. I hope I should

nefer see vun again!" Joe, he all but throwed the gun into my arms, and when I got it he bust out cryin' like a kid and then he laughs kinda wild and throws his arms around in the air. "Thank Gott!" he hollers, like he's hysterical. "Now idt iss over for me!"

Well, Joe, I'm too weak to carry that gun, on the level, and this guy says: "Mister Harmony, please let me carry idt. You iss too hurt. I vill giff idt back whenever you vant idt. You are sure I vill eadt?"

"You said it," I says. "Come on, let's go!"

"Vait chust a minute," he says. "I vill be right back!"

Before I can stop him, he dives into the woods and is gone. Well, I think I should of had more sense than to have trusted a squarehead, and the chances are he has either left me flat or will come back with one of his officers. I'm just startin' to make a break for it when back comes Fritz — and,

Joe, they's about twenty other guys with him.

Good night! I thinks — I'm gone now!

"Hey, what's the idea?" I hollers to Fritz. "What's all them guys gonna do?"

"Mister Harmony," he says. "Don't got mad on me. Dey iss friends of mine, und dey is all got enough of the war too! Please ledt dem go back mit us!"

"Ja! Ja!" they all hollers. "Kamerad! Kamerad!"

Oh, boy!!!!

Well, Joe, it is all I can do to keep from bustin' out laughin'. Here is twenty squareheads beggin' me to take 'em prisoner, and I'm wounded and ain't even got a nail file to fight with!

"All right!" I says. "Fall in!"

Joe, we start away with one of 'em which is a sergeant and badly wounded leadin' and me bringin' up the rear with two of 'em half carryin' me. Fritz is right beside me carryin' the gun, and, boy, they ain't nobody

ever brought no batch of prisoners in like that, I'll tell the world! It looked more like a Chaplin movie than anything else.

Joe, by this time I had no more idea of where the American lines was than I have of who's chief of police of Brazil, but this squarehead sergeant claimed he knowed the way, and they was nothin' to do but let him lead. We're gettin' away from the battle, although now and then a shell busts in the fields around us, so's we'll know they's still a war in full swing.

We have gone about a mile, and me and this squarehead sergeant is about all in from the hike and loss of blood, when who do we come on, Joe, but a German officer all by his lonesome. The minute these guys got a flash at him they begin to chatter among themselves, and they acted so scared of this guy, even though they was twenty to one, that I was afraid all was over with me and they would turn me in. You know, Joe, the squareheads get beat up so much by their

officers, even in peace times, that they are afraid even to change their collar without gettin' permission. This Fritz tells me to get in the middle of them and say nothin' and by that time we are in front of the officer. They all go through a salutin' spree and then the wounded sergeant says they are takin' me in prisoner.

"Who detailed all these men to take in one prisoner?" he snarls, as Fritz told me afterward.

Well, Joe, the sergeant gets balled up, and the officer cuts in on him.

"Pig!" he bellers. "You are lying. You are going in the wrong direction — *Schweinhund!*"

Joe, with that he pulls out a gun and whangs this wounded guy across the face with it, droppin' him.

Well, this here was too much for me, Joe, believe me! I ain't got no love for no squarehead on earth, but this guy was wounded and defenseless, and when that big

tramp walloped him with the butt of a gun I went nutty! I figured all bets was off anyways, so I plowed through them stupid-lookin' simps which was standin' there doin' nothin', and I let that dog with the gray cloak have it. I caught him on the chin with a left-hander, and then I put my right between his eyes. He give one yell and went down sprawlin', and the minute he touched dirt the other squareheads starts yellin', and I had my hands full keepin' them guys from kickin' him in the face!

Joe, this here slight exercise loosened up my wound again, and them guys fixed me and the sergeant up. I had a tough time to keep from goin' to sleep, but I would sooner of croaked than let them squareheads see a American officer faint. They kicked this here officer to his feet and took away his artillery, and the like, and he wasn't so high, only bein' a colonel, but that's better than nothin', hey, Joe? I told him to fall in, and I used plenty of adjectives too, Joe!

Well, in about half an hour more I had passed our outposts, which looked at the parade with their eyes and mouths as open as a Mobile crap game. I found out where brigade headquarters was, and I marched my gang right up to the colonel himself.

Joe, he got up and looked over the collection and let forth a gasp.

"All *your* prisoners?" he says. "Why, great Heavens, it's Harmon again! You were reported missing."

"I didn't get far, sir!" I says. "I was detailed to take twenty men to silence a enemy machine gun and did the same, killin' the crew, capturin' the gun and turnin' it back on the squareheads. I have eleven casualties to report, but I brung back this bunch to make up for it. How's everything goin'?"

Joe, the colonel didn't say a word for a minute, and then he grabs my hand.

"Lieutenant," he says, "I — I — well, I can't say anything! I think if you were let

alone and unhampered by orders, you'd capture a whole army corps. I — why, you're wounded, man —"

"Yes, sir," I says. "But I can't help it. A guy can't make lemonade without cuttin' up some lemons, but —"

Well, Joe, that's all I knowed till I come to life in a base hospital with Jeanne weepin' over the bed and a Red Cross nurse sayin': "There, there!" to her. I kissed Jeanne, which braced me up like a shot of brandy, and then I went off again, havin' seen all I wanted to, the same bein' *her*.

Joe, that's about all. I have been promoted to first lieutenant and grabbed off another medal, and if I get any more I'll look like Sousa. I'm feelin' pretty good now and will be out before long, but unfortunately they won't let me get in this brawl over here for quite a little while now. I hope them guys can take care of the thing all right till I get in it again, and it's gonna

be a terrible war when I do, I'll tell the world!

Joe, I got a big surprise for you! I just got the flash myself from Jeanne. Joe, listen — *can you imagine havin' somebody to call me "Papa"?*

Oh, boy!!!!

Yours truly,

First Lieutenant EDWARD EDISON HARMON, A. E. F. (Meanin': "A Expectin' Father.")

P. S.— Joe, the captain tells me I am gonna be sent back to the U. S. to teach them babies in the cantonments the short cut to Berlin. Can you imagine Jeanne when she gets her first flash at Broadway? Oh, boy!!

FOURTH INNING

PLAIN WATER

I

Vivela, France.

DEAR JOE: Well, Joe, I have gone to work and become the bouncin' father of the greatest little kid you, I, or anybody else ever laid a eye on. He turned out to be a boy and Jeanne and me is no doubt the proudest couple in the world outside of Gen. Foch's or any doughboy's parents. He is only a couple of weeks of age, but as bright as a electric light, and whilst he ain't much to look at right now, neither was Napoleon the first two weeks, hey, Joe? If he don't get some hair pretty soon, I will no doubt have to stake him to a wig, but Jeanne claims if I will only let him alone he will have his

own hair in due time, together with teeth and the like.

Joe, he is a dead ringer for me outside of havin' no hair or teeth, although Jeanne claims it's like lookin' in a mirror when *she* looks at him. This war's corespondent and the trained officer from Plattsburg come around to see him with presents and the like, prob'ly tryin' to make themselves solid with me. Well, Joe, the Plattsburg guy says he don't look much like his father and the war's corespondent says he don't blame him, and if it hadn't of been for Jeanne I would of trimmed the both of them!

Joe, it took me quite a time to make up my mind what to name him because I wanted to get somethin' classy when I did pick it out. The war's corespondent says why don't I name him after some famous man, and I says all right I will call him Ed Harmon, Jr. Well, Joe, Jeanne claims that one Ed in the family is ample and she will call him Raoul after her brother, and I says

why not call him Shorty Harmon and be done with it and we can change it when he gets bigger. Joe, Jeanne couldn't see that either, so I begin to cast around for some swell name like a actor or the like claims is his own, and I come across a magazine which had a big ad for some collar company in it. Joe, the guy which named them collars must of been the same bird which christens all the Pullman cars, apartment houses, golf courses, and Fifth Avenue hotels. They was a lot of high-class names like "De Luxe," "Amagassett," "Delancey," "Nonpareil," and etc. Well, Joe, I was hesitatin' between namin' the infant "De Luxe Harmon" or "Nonpareil Harmon," either of which is class, when Jeanne says she ain't gonna name no child of hers after no collar, and anyways she's got a name already picked out for him. I says what is it, and she tells me "Wilson Harmon," which is after the President and not the whisky, Joe, and we're gonna let it stand at

that for the time bein', because there is a combination that can't be beat! The two best guys in the world, hey, Joe?

Joe, the war's corespondent says that's great, only it will be confusin' in after years to the boy, havin' to change his first name every time a new president is elected so's to keep up to date. Well, I can't help it now, Joe, and anyways he can always find out who's president by callin' up the newspapers and etc., hey, Joe?

Well, Joe, I am callin' him Bill already, which is short for Wilson, and he's got a pair of lungs on him which would make a lion quit like a dog. The first time he seen me he knowed me right away, and what does he do but put his fat little arms around my neck and let forth a giggle. And that's the way it goes all the time now, Joe. Whenever he is yellin' murder, all I got to do is pick him up in my arms, and I am the same as laudanum to him, Joe, because he shuts right up and sleeps.

Joe, Jeanne is as proud as prohibition with a new State, and she ain't got nothin' on her folks either. Joe, they stand around and bounce him up in the air, which is tough on his stomach, and talk to him in French. They ain't no wonder he's cryin' half the time because they say "Google-ooo!" and stuff like that to him, like he was a simp or somethin', and that's enough to get anybody sore, let alone a newly born infant, hey, Joe? From the attention they give *me,* you'd think I was simply a friend of the family instead of the infant's old man. Every time I pick him up they say look out, I'm liable to hurt him, and don't hold him like he was a suit case or leave his head roll around on his neck. Joe, all Jeanne does is just look at me and smile, and if she was a good-looker before you oughta see her now. Oh, boy!!! Joe, she looks as good to me as interest does to a loan shark.

Well, Joe, the captain told me to get ready as soon as possible for another boat ride, be-

cause I have been picked out to go back to the Land of the Free and give the guys in the cantonments a idea of what they gotta do when they get in the Big Show over here. Of course, I am tickled silly at the chance to gaze upon sweet old Broadway once again, but at the same time I hate to leave here whilst they is still so much doin'. No doubt Pershing and Foch has got the game sewed up tight or they would never take a chance and send me to the showers whilst they was more innin's to play.

Joe, I went over and broke the news to Jeanne as gentle as possible. I says: "Well, good-by. They is a chance that I will never lay a eye on you again!"

"Edouard!" she says, holdin' fast to my baby. "What now has come to us?"

"Nothin' much," I says; "only the Germans has threatened to call off the war unless Pershing takes me outa the trenches so's it'll be a little more even for them. I am about to set sail for America!"

"Shut up!" I says. "You oughta be on the board of pardons—you never let nobody finish a sentence!" *See page 130*

"Mon Dieu!" she remarks. "What then will become of the future of Jeanne and little Weelson?"

"Search me!" I says. "See a fortune teller. However, I —"

"Viola!" butts in her brother, the well-known French ace from the aviation dept. "What have we here? You would go away and abandon to themselves alone *mon petit* Jeanne and the infant of the most charming?"

"Shut up!" I says. "You oughta be on the board of pardons — you never let nobody finish a sentence! If you would of gimme a chance, it was quiverin' on the tip of my tongue to say that I'm gonna take Jeanne and Bill with me."

"Edouard, *mon chéri!*" hollers Jeanne — and presents me with a kiss the like of which was never had before by nobody.

"Ha! That is most magnificent!" says her brother, which would of did the same only I feinted and made him hiss.

"Da, da, da, da, da, da!" remarks my baby and busts his bottle on a chair so's to hold up his end.

"Je serai enchantée!" says Jeanne, bouncin' the infant up and down —*"je porterai ma robe de soie!"*

"Listen!" I says. "You know full well that I ain't got no idea what that stuff means. For all I know, *'Vive la France!'* means 'What time is it?' in English. I have gave you a workin' knowledge of the English language, and you know enough of it for common daily conversation between a married couple. If you —"

"Avec plaisir!" she says. "Know I well the English, *chéri,* but the French is a language very spread, and after the war has end everybody will speak nothing of the else. But it shall be as you wish, Edouard, *mon brave,* what I have say to you is this: 'I am of the delight to go to that America, but *je porterai ma robe —'"*

"Gimme it in English!" I hollers.

"Very of the well," she says with a innocent smile. "It is then thus, as you would say it: Hell! I have not of the clothes with which to cause those sensations in that America, such as would delight the heart of my husbands. But with the thousand francs I would take myself then to Madame Joly at Paree and Oh of the boys! When you should stare at Jeanne then, you would shout: *'Viola!* But I will instruct the universe that she is of the kid considerable!' *N'est-ce pas?*"

With that, Joe, she stops outa breath, and if you could of seen her cute little face all flushed up with the excitement of gettin' that off, you'd of got outa breath too — from lookin' at her! "I will instruct the universe!" Joe, get that? Oh, lady!

Well, Joe, a thousand francs is somethin' like two hundred bucks in real money, but what is that between man and wife, especially a wife like Jeanne, hey, Joe? And then again, Joe, this here trip back will

practically be our honeymoon, and I am gettin' a chance to have the same without goin' to Niagara Falls or Atlantic City, like all the hicks does after they have staggered away from the altar or the alderman. So I says the followin':

"All right, honey! Pack up my baby and etc. and get ready to go to that Paree. I will cable over to the U. S. for some of the jack I saved whilst playin' baseball, and we will grab off a trousseaux that will dumfound Europe! They won't be no moan from me if you scatter even five thousand francs to the dressmakers, because they is nothin' too good for the wife of his excellency First Lieutenant Harmon."

Well, Joe, Jeanne went wild with joy, and why not, and claims she is almost glad the boches started the war on account of it havin' brung me to France!

Yours truly,

First Lieutenant EDWARD EDISON HARMON.

II

A English Port — by the name of London.

DEAR JOE: Well, Joe, we are on our way to the *Etats Unis,* which is French slang for New York, and expect to get the boat tomorrow if the guys in the steamship office ain't liars. Congress or President Wilson or Pershing is payin' my way back free and first cabin, but I had to kick in with two hundred berries so's Jeanne and my baby wouldn't have to ride on the rudder. Well, Joe, we got a swell flat on this ship. I seen a picture of it, and if half of it is true, I'll be satisfied. The layout is made up of a bath, bedroom, and drawin' room, and is knowed as a bridal sweets. Well, that's us, Joe, and I know why it is called that. It is because when a man gets married he has gone to work and put his head through a bridal, and from then on his wife leads him

here and there like a horse. As far as the drawin' room is concerned, I won't have no use for it, because we never had no artist's blood in our family, and all I ever drawed was my breath and wages. But maybe Jeanne is there with the brush and paints and will entertain me by drawin' pictures whilst we are goin' across.

Joe, before I left the front the other officers gimme a dinner, and for dessert I was presented with nothin' less than a gold wrist watch which the trained officer from Plattsburg had captured from a squarehead captain in the heat of fightin', when anything goes. The war's corespondent which had my picture printed in the Associated Press let forth a speech, windin' up by sayin' it will sure be a tough war after I have gone, because they will be no more laughs till I come back. Well, Joe, then they was a lot of other guys took advantage of a lifetime opportunity and made some speeches themselves, and I was wishin' I had

brung along my gas mask, even though practically all of them said things about me which would of made you, for instance, swell-headed. Joe, they didn't bother me, though, because they only mentioned half the things I done, anyways.

Well, Joe, it was only natural, after all that, that them guys would call on me to give a speech, so's the thing would be a success, and I got up amidst the wildest applause and four shells from the German trenches. Neither of 'em rattled me, but they was nothin' much I could say except thanks for the blowout and the like and tell the boys to be good and don't stay out late and etc. till I come back. Joe, they wasn't satisfied with that, but claims I have got to tell them what I think of the war and how long it will last and etc. So I says I thought the war was pretty fair so far, and I had no kick comin', but I didn't know when it would be over to the minute. I says I hoped Germany wouldn't quit on me

till I come back, because I wanted at least one crack at the Crown's Prince which wears the Kelley with the skeleton's head and bones on the front of it. Well, I says, I had often wondered in the privacy of my bunk why him and his old man wore them hats with signs on them like they is on a bottle of carbolic acid, but I knowed now why they did it. It is simply because both of them guys is poison to the whole world, but we got a antydote for 'em in the shape of cold American bay'nets and hot lead, and I think the Cubs is a cinch in the world series, because who couldn't trim the Red Sox?

Well, Joe, I was a riot and knocked 'em off of their seats, although I got a assist in that part of it from a bomb which made good outside the dugout just then and all but buried the banquet alive. They was nobody hurt, only dirty, and I blew after shakin' hands all around twice and swearin' to Heavens I would write all of 'em letters

and etc. when I hit New York, if I ever did.

Joe, I got another surprise from that tough bunch of doughboys which was under me and which was knowed as " Jeanne's Roughneck Assassins." They all drawed up at attention, and Slugger Weir, which is now a corporal and which I once had to knock kickin' so's to get proper respect and the like from him, salutes and hands me a pocketbook. As long as it wasn't the first of April I opened the thing, and, Joe, it was full of francs, and they must of been over fifty bucks in it. I asked him what it was all about, and he says the bunch has chipped together and they want me to stake myself and Jeanne to a travelin' bag in Paris to remember them by. If they is any change left over after them French Jesse Jameses gets through with me, I am to grab off somethin' for my baby. He says he is sorry they couldn't of give me the bag instead of the dough, which doin' that looked like Third Avenue, but they was no stores of any

account in No Man's Land and they was so busy right then they simply couldn't get away nowheres else to do no shoppin'.

Well, Joe, you could of knocked me over with a tank, and for a minute I didn't know what to say. To see them babies goin' over the top you wouldn't think they was a soft spot in their systems, but that only goes to show you can't never tell what a guy is from lookin' at him. In citizen's clothes Foch looks like a well-to-do retired millionaire, but when he gets inside a uneyform — oh, lady!! Well, Joe, I fin'ly managed to thank 'em and prob'ly made a mess out of it on account of my Adam's apple gettin' loose from its moorin's and tryin' to choke me the while. Anyways, they presented me with three cheers and says they will make me proud of 'em before I come back, and I took it on the run before I broke down and cried like a hysterical baby and then they would of been off of me for life!

Joe, I will buy a travelin' bag, whatever

that is, outa my own pocket and tell 'em I got it with their hard-earned dough. The money they give me I will buy cigarettes with and send 'em all some, and I would of done that anyways.

Well, Joe, me and Jeanne and my baby went up to Paris that night and the next day started out to help the storekeepers over a tough year. Joe, if you ever get wed, which is hardly possible, be sure your fair young bride has got her trousseaux herself before you drag her to the license bureau. I'll tell the world, or instruct the universe, as Jeanne says, that them guys took me like we took Cantigny! They ain't nothin' a girl ever wore, from a hairpin to a opry cloak, left in Paris. I bought 'em all! You know, Joe, when a man goes shoppin' he prob'ly buys himself a two-buck hat, and after lettin' the salesman devil him into buyin' maybe a coupla extra collars or the like, he's through for the day and does all the rest of his shoppin' over a counter which has got

to be wiped dry every few minutes or you'll get your elbows wet. Well, Joe, it's slightly different with a woman, especially one which is a boss good looker and is runnin' wild for prob'ly the first time. She starts in usually with buyin' a ice-cream soda on the first floor and winds up by fightin' with the manager over the price of the buildin'.

Joe, we went into this Madame Joly's, which is a steal from them French shops on Fifth Avenue, except that the owner is really French. These guys sells dresses, and the cheapest one is worth a garage full of Rolls-Royces. First, they paraded a lot of swell-lookin' dames across the floor, each wearin' a different layout, and any one of 'em would hold up traffic if she ever strolled down Broadway. I was havin' the same kind of a time that a bald-headed guy does at a floor table in the Frolic, and these dames all grinned at me like a wolf. Jeanne happens to glance over my way, and the show

The lady yegg that run the place was there with the old oil and went ravin' insane over every dress Jeanne put on. *See page* 141

was closed then and there. The dames was sent to the showers, and Jeanne tries on the stuff herself. The lady yegg that run the place was there with the old oil and went ravin' insane over every dress Jeanne put on. The higher the price was the noisier she got and when Jeanne tried out one that cost five hundred francs this dame went hysterical with praise. The air was full of *"Charmant, charmant!"* and then all the models commence to dance around, wavin' their hands and shoulders and yellin' *"Très bien!"* and the like. Well, they says I was lucky to have such a pretty wife, and I says so was they, otherwise I never would of come in there and what's the bad news and be done with it. I got a bill that sounded like the German casualty list the day the marines was introduced to them, and I blowed before they tried to sell me the Ethel Tower.

Well, Joe, that's the way it went all day.

We turned into a street which was prob'ly called "Pinochle Avenue" because one store was No. 250 and the one right next to it was 300. I seen a colored guy comin' out of the next place, and I guess that was No. 400 on account of spades bein' double. Anyways, the same wild scenes was had everywhere we went, and by five o'clock my bank roll was yellin' for the cops. Jeanne staked herself to enough hats, dresses, shoes, stockin's and — well, she also got a lot of lace stuff and the like which is advertised in the subway and shouldn't be, and the customs guys is gonna have a field day when we hit New York.

Just as we was gonna leave Paris, Joe, Jeanne asks me if I ain't gonna get nothin' for myself. Well, I thumbed over the wreck of my dough and says yes, and we went in and bought a pack of cigarettes.

Well, Joe, even if I did spend a lotta dough I ain't gonna get insomnia on account of it. I done it for Jeanne, and if you could

see her in some of this stuff — well, you wouldn't think I was no sucker, anyways!

Yours truly,

First Lieutenant EDWARD EDISON HARMON.

(Jeanne sends her love, Joe, but don't kid yourself; she's only doin' it outa common politeness.)

III

On Board of a Ship.

DEAR JOE: Well, Joe, we are now dashin' over a prominent ocean on the same ship I come over here on as a doughboy, but, oh, boy, what a difference they is now! On the way over I traveled in the hole of the boat like a cattle and did my dreamin' on the deck, but now I am a officer and livin' like a chorus girl. I have got the swellest flat here you ever seen in your life, and Jeanne and my baby is tickled silly with it. First, they is the bathroom, and you can get either fresh- or saltwater showers, if the thing would only work, and then comes the bedroom. Well, it has got swell carpet on the floor and a big brass bed and a couch and chairs and runnin' water which was such a fast runner that it must of run clean off the

ship, because I can't find it. Then they is life preservers up on a rack where a guy would have to be champion high jumper to get at them, and electric lights and etc. But, Joe, the principal thing is buttons. They is more electric push buttons in this place than they is uneyforms in France. They are all over the rooms, and even if you fall under the bed or the like when the ship hits a bump they will be a button there so's you can ring for anything you want. They ain't no limit to what you can ask for, because you don't get nothin' anyways. They is a sign in the room that says ring once for the steward, twice for the stewardess, and three times for the waiter. I suppose five rings will bring the captain on the run and six a whale or the like, hey, Joe?

Well, Joe, the drawin' room turned out to be nothin' less than a parlor with swell furniture, some more of them buttons, and a lot of books layin' around called " B. & O. Express Service between New York and

Points West" and "Delightful Cruises for $500 and Up," and hot stuff like that. I'm figurin' on usin' the room for a stud-poker court or a pinochle links if I meet up with any gamblers on board.

I was lucky to get Jeanne's passport in time, because they have just passed a new law that officers' wives is not allowed to travel with 'em either goin' across or comin' back. Well, Joe, I suppose they done that because the Government thinks that after a man has just come from the war he is entitled to a little rest and peace, etc., hey?

Well, Joe, bein' on a ship goin' across the ocean a guy would naturally get the idea he was on the water wagon, but such is not the case on this ship, Joe. They is more saloons here than they is Irishmen in Dublin. First comes the dinin' saloon, then they is the ladies' saloon, the readin' saloon, the men's saloon, and the main saloon. Well, Joe, this saloon stuff is all camouflage at that, because they ain't no bartender ever sets

foot over the door of any of 'em. They are full of tables, chairs, and books and money hounds called stewards, and all you can get in 'em is seasick. They don't even know how to spell it right, because the signs says "Salon." The real gin mill is hid up in the smokin' room, and you can get a bottle of so-called beer up there very reasonable — that is, it don't cost no more than a quart of wine would in New York.

But, Joe, this don't bother me none, because I ain't had a swallow of alcohol in so long that for all I know a rye highball is made of jelly. I quit fightin' booze when I started fightin' the Kaiser, and both them things was the best things I ever done! I ain't gonna let forth no temperance lecture, Joe, because you never could drink anyways, and used to get a bun on from readin' a beer sign outside a saloon, but you wanna get ready to kiss old kid booze fare-thee-well. They are goin' through the rye now like we're goin' through the squareheads, and in

about one more year the bartenders will all be workin' in Huyler's and askin' you if they is enough chocolate in your sundae, instead of what will you have on the side.

Well, Joe, everybody on the ship is wild over Jeanne and my baby. Every time they come up on deck and sit down you'd think they was runnin' a crap game, they is so many people gets around them. The women all goes hysterical and claims they can hardly believe that such a beautiful little girl like Jeanne, which don't look a night over seventeen, can be a mother, and can they take the baby for a minute? The men all says I am a lucky dog and should be proud of my family, as if I was goin' around knockin' 'em, or somethin'. Well, I went and hired a stewardess to mind my baby so's Jeanne would have three seconds to herself now and then, not that they's anywheres to go, and what does Jeanne do but fire her. She says she wouldn't let nobody look after my baby but herself, and I must be unhu-

man to even think of it. Well, Joe, I ain't jealous of my baby, or nothin' like that, but I must say I am bein' made to feel that I ain't the only onion in the hash right now.

Joe, havin' nothin' else to do, and as Jeanne seems to think that about seven minutes' conversation a day is about enough for me, I went up to the smokin' room. Well, Joe, that is some place and is well named, because all the guys which is in there must of hit up the pipe or somethin', from the stories they tell each other whilst sittin' around the tables. They seems to be somethin' in the air of a smokin' room that makes terrible liars outa the most ordinarily honest guys on earth. They have all had more adventures than Robinson Crusoe — in their minds — and don't hesitate to tell 'em. In half a hour I had met three guys which had been torpedoed between twenty and thirty times, one bird which got shipwrecked on a lonely island and was captured barehanded

by cannibals, two guys which had box seats at the Russian Revolution, and a guy which was on the *Lusitania* and walked around helpless on the bottom of the ocean for hours, till picked up by a taxi or somethin'. Well, Joe, before them guys got half through I was in a trance, and I went down and told Jeanne all about the time I went to the North Pole and almost died from heat prostration, and she opens her eyes and says she never knowed I was such a adventurer, and I says neither did I till I went up to the smokin' room.

Well, Joe, I went back there again tonight, bein' a glutton for punishment, and everybody was wearin' their life preservers on account of us still bein' in the war zone. I carried mine in my hand, because, if I wore it, it would hide too much of my First Lieutenant's uneyform. Naturally, wherever I go they is a epidemic of twisted necks, because if I do say it myself they is worse-lookin' guys than me workin' as models.

Then, again, I have got some wounded stripes, Joe, and they's so many medals pinned on me that I look like one of them catsups or mustards which is by special appointment to the king, or the like.

Well, they is two guys sittin' alone in a booth, and they invited me in and introduced themselves and says what am I gonna have? I says I ain't drinkin' a thing, thanks, and one guy says he's sorry, but he don't think they is any rye on the boat. Well, I explains that I don't care for no alcohol whatsoever, and besides I think it's nutty to buy some guy a drink every time you have one, not that I'm tight, or the like. When you go to buy a suit of clothes and happen to meet a friend outside the store, you don't ask him to come in and have a suit with you, do you? Suppose you did ask him and he said all right and took a couple of silk shirts for a chaser, hey? Well, this guy says that's a good argument, and he never looked at it that way before, but he has had

a rough day with the ocean and etc. and needs a drink like a race horse needs legs, not havin' had one for twenty-four hours. The steward is down to dinner, and they won't be nothin' doin' for a half hour, and it's all he can do to sit still. He's got on a life preserver he brung with him from England, and it's nothin' less than a inner tube from a flivver. He claims it's got the others all beat to death, and he could hold up a dozen men in the water, if he had to, with it if anything happens. I says I will look for him if we get torpedoed, but if he ever got a blow-out whilst wearin' that in the water it would certainly be tough, because they is so few garages in the Atlantic. Well, Joe, he begins to laugh, and pretty soon we was all tellin' jokes and the usual smokin'-room lies and etc., and all the time this guy which wanted the drink is gettin' more nervous and wishin' the steward would get through eatin' and come up and save his life.

He asks me how was the Battle of Cantigny, Joe, and I says terrible noisy, and he sees I don't wanna brag about myself, except maybe to tell him how I got the medals, so he asks me if I ever heard the boys singin' "The Eddystone Light" in France. I says no, but, then, that don't mean nothin', because I have missed a lot of things in my time and didn't even see the Battle of Gettysburg. Well, he says he was over there entertainin' the boys, and he sung that and it went big. He says it's a old sailor's hymn, and he could sing it better if he had on oilskins and a chorus dressed like old fishermen in back of him, because he not only sings, but acts it. I don't know whether he claimed he wrote it himself or not, Joe, but we was in the smokin' room at the time, so he prob'ly did. Well, I says I'll fall and let's hear it, and he says he'll do what he can whilst waitin' for the steward, and with that he starts it off.

Joe, it goes like this:

My father kept the Eddystone light.
He married a mer-my-aid one night;
Out of the match came offspring three,
Two was fish and the tother were me.
Dum, dum, diddle, diddle, dum, dum, dum!

When I was but a boyish chip
I was put in charge of the old lightship;
I kept the lamps well-filled with oil,
And I played seven-up accordin' to Hoyle.
Dum, dum, diddle, diddle, dum, dum, dum!

One night when I was trimmin' the glim,
I was singin' a verse of the evenin' hymn,
I saw by the light of the signal lamp
My mother out there so jolly and damp.
Dum, dum, diddle, diddle, dum, dum, dum!

I went to the window and shouted ahoy!
There was mother asittin' on a buoy,
Meanin' a buoy for ships what sail,
Not the kind what's a juvenile male.
Dum, dum, diddle, diddle, dum, dum, dum!

A sailor, a sailor, oh, there's no such life what's led on shore
As the life what's led where the oceans roar!

Well, Joe, toward the end of this ballad this guy gets a little loud, and he was swingin' his arms around and goin'

"Brrrr!" to imitate the wind which was supposed to be ragin' whilst he sung this. Everybody in the smokin' room was watchin' and listenin', and right before he got finished the steward come in. When the song was all done with, everybody clapped their hands and yelled for more except the steward. He stood there frownin' and stickin' up his nose, and then this guy sees him and hollers: "Come hither, James — I perish for liquor!"

Well, Joe, the steward puts his fingers to his lips and says "Sssh!" and then he comes over, walkin' very stiff.

"I cannot serve you, sir, thank you!" he says, with ten cents' worth of ice on each word.

"Why not?" bellers the singer.

The steward bends over and lowers his voice, and it's even colder.

"I think you've 'ad a bit enough, sir," he says. "What with wavin' abaout your arms like a bloomin' windmill, if I may say, and

raisin' your voice with regard to the somewhat odd adventures of your parents, it's quite shockin', thank you!"

"Had a bit enough?" says this guy, kinda dazed. "What the — you're crazy! I haven't had a drink all day, and I'm as sober as a judge. I'm an actor, and I was simply entertaining my friends with a little song."

"I've seen so many of them!" remarks the steward. "Splendid gentlemen they was until they got in their cups. I would suggest, sir, a cold bawth, a dish of hot tea, and a bit of a nap. Shall I ring for your bedroom steward?"

"I wanna Scotch and soda, you big stiff!" hollers this guy, red in the face.

"I shall 'ave nothink further to do in the matter," says the steward. "But I may say that it will be necessary for you to leave the room if you persist in being violent!"

With that he walks away and leaves us flat.

Well, Joe, I thought I would develop the

hysterics from laughin'. This guy which hadn't a drink all day, and was as sober as I was, couldn't of got no booze in there if he had offered the Woolworth Buildin' for a gin rickey. For all I know, he ain't got one there yet! So, Joe, if you ever come over in a smokin' room, do all the lyin' you like, but lay off singin'!

Joe, I happened to look at the bottom of my soup plate at dinner the other night, and what I seen there all but took away my appetite, if that's possible. Joe, it says "Made in Germany" on it, and I at once took the plate and hurled it overboard, much to the surprise of everybody else which was eatin' at the time. The purser wanted to know what was the trouble, and I told him, and he's English, Joe, and he gets red in the face and says I done quite right. He orders every dish on the ship searched for that mark, and them which had it on went to the sharks. Joe, they is only one place where that trademark ought to go, and that is on

the war, which if it was stamped " Made in Germany " would be absolutely right!

Well, Joe, we have reached New York Harbor without bein' torpedoed or nothin', but I can't help it, and pretty soon we'll be passin' the Statue of Liberty. Joe, then will come Broadway, and I feel so happy I could yell out loud with joy, only that smoke-room steward which used to be a valet to a duke has got me buffaloed. Joe, the trip across was great, and we was well protected, and I only got seasick once and that was the day we left England. I am just gettin' over it now. Jeanne and my baby stood the voyage like they was born in the navy, but they was quite a lot of people which would of got Hoover's goat from the way they wasted their food in the rough weather.

Joe, I have just seen the wireless news, and it says the Red Sox grabbed off the first game of the world series from the Cubs on account of Babe Ruth makin' the Chicago

guys check their bats at the entrance to the park. Well, that guy is there, and if I was pitchin' now him and me would no doubt be the leadin' twirlers of the year, hey, Joe?

Joe, we are just passin' the Statue of Liberty now, and I got my hat off, and I am so choked up that I can't write no more. Look at all I have done since I last seen that old girl and what I have been through and etc. Joe, they are all yellin' now, and some of the women is cryin', and the like, with joy because we got back safe, and I have showed it to Jeanne and made my baby wave at it. Well, Joe, I am sayin': "Hello, old girl, I am sure glad to see you, and you are lookin' fine! You look so good to Ed Harmon that he's goin' back as soon as he can trim the stuffin' outa that rough-neck Kaiser, which by this time knows he made the mistake of his life when he tried to get fresh with *you*. Old girl, you got about ten million big brothers, and when that guy tried to kid you, he *done* somethin'!"

Say! — you big stiff, I am off you for life! A guy just come alongside with some magazines and newspapers and books, and I drawed one called "From Baseball to Boches," whatever that is. Well, I figured it was some dope on the world series, and I begin to read it, and here it's nothin' less than all the letters I have wrote you! What d'ye mean by that, hey? I wrote you them letters in confidence and not to be give to no magazine so's all the world could find out my intimate doin's, and the like. A guy which would pull a thing like that would put carbolic in a infant's milk, and I'm gonna find what camp you are at and, oh, boy! Joe, you will wish them squareheads had got me, I'll tell the world!

Yours with rage,
First Lieutenant EDWARD EDISON HARMON.

(Joe, listen. No doubt you got a good piece of jack for them letters, and if such is the case I want 50 per cent or your right arm. It's up to you which I get!)

FIFTH INNING

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S SCREAM

I

A Port on the Hudson, frequently called New York.

DEAR JOE: Well, Joe, I'm takin' a chance on you gettin' this letter, because for all I know you may be in Berlin by now with the A. E. F. which was goin' there so fast when I left 'em that they was a lot of the Heinies got *trampled* to death on account of our gang runnin' right over 'em! No doubt you also have been over the top and etc. and learned enough French to order a steak and get bacon and eggs instead in one of them Paris restaurants and have come to believe that they is only one word in the Ger man language and that's "Kamerad." Of course you or nobody else will never have no adventures like befell unto me, but still with

the war goin' on and etc. you will prob'ly find enough to do to keep you from passin' away of idleness whilst in France, hey, Joe?

Well, me and Jeanne and my baby is somewheres in New York now, and in a few days I will be down at a joint by the name of Yaphank, L. I., teachin' them draft babies how to get across the Rhine without payin' no ferry fare, and the like. Right now we are livin' in a swell hotel, and they can't tell me Jesse James is dead because I'll tell the world fair that guy is runnin' this place! It costs more money to live here than it did to build Brooklyn, and we are gonna grab off a flat somewheres in Harlem as soon as I can find one where the rent don't sound like the fare to Australia by taxi.

Joe, it is sure great to be back in New York once again and hear good old United States bein' spoke all around you, not that I got anything against the French language, which is all right once you get used to it, only who expects to live 200 years, hey, Joe?

Also, it is fine to deal with dollars and cents instead of this franc, centime, and pound stuff which no American will ever get through his head if he stayed on the other side till the Hudson River turns to grape juice.

Well, Joe, the old town ain't changed a bit since I left, except things is a lot different with lightless nights, meatless days, useless cabarets, and seatless subways. Broadway still looks like a steal on No Man's Land with more trenches in it than I ever seen in France. Joe, I can't get through my dome why they are always pickin' and shovelin' on New York. They can't let it alone for a minute, and as soon as they get one subway built, some other guy comes along and gets a permit to dig up the gas mains, partly on account of they bein' a leak somewheres, but mostly on account of him havin' been a leadin' accessory to the crime of electin' whoever gives out the contracts. Joe, my advice to the young

men from Bird's Nest, W. Va., and Cereal Crossin', Iowa, which is thinkin' of comin' to New York to make their fortune is the followin': Bring a pick and shovel with you and you will never want for a day's work. My idea is that half the guys in New York is contractors and the other half is workin' for 'em diggin' streets. If you can't get a job from nobody, don't let that worry you. Take your little old pick and shovel, select a avenue and go to it. Everybody else is doin' it, and they won't be a soul bother you!

Well, Joe, of course it was just my luck to run right into this Spanish Influence thing which is all the rage just now. Joe, they is one thing about the U. S.: when we fall for anything they ain't no halfway with us; it sweeps the country. First it was Chaplin, then come the Brazilian tango, and now it's the Spanish Influence. Joe, where does Spain get off to send that influence thing over to us? I thought they was neutral! Well, anyways, Joe — we licked them babies

once and we can do it again. I already beat German bullets and the like, and I got a constitution as strong as the one the U. S. has, so I guess this influence thing won't gimme no trouble, hey, Joe?

Well, Joe, Jeanne is tickled silly with New York and ain't a bit homesick, only havin' wished she was back in Paris about three million times so far. Little Bill is likewise doin' fine and is now somethin' like two months of old. He can't read or write yet, but that don't say he's no dummy, and I guess it's a little early to start him to school. Still and all, when I was his age I was able to play the piano and auction pinochle, but then I was always a trifle above the average, hey, Joe?

Joe, I got Jeanne and my baby all settled in the hotel and then I says the followin':

"Well, honey, I am goin' uptown for a coupla minutes now and see all my old-time pals, which I ain't laid a eye on since I cast the dust of the Hudson River off of my feet.

I won't be long, and I will bring back the pick of the lot to meet you, and we'll have a big dinner together, afterward takin' in a show or the like, hey?"

Well, Joe, you'd think a layout like that would tickle the ordinary wife silly, hey? Not Jeanne! Joe, she turns that million-dollar gaze upon me and does what they claim is poutin'.

"Edouard!" she says. "Of the so soon then you are tired of Jeanne? You would leave me alone here by myself desolate?"

"Wrong again!" I says, crossin' the room at a bound. "I ain't no more tired of you than Morgan is sick of Wall Street, only these birds is all old buddies of mine and I'm crazy to see them again. I think more of you than Mary Pickford does of a camera, but I trust you ain't gonna sue me for a divorce on the grounds of desertion every time I step out to buy a paper or the like, are you?"

Well, Joe, she wiggles her shoulders and

presents me with a gaze which would of froze me to death if I hadn't of had on a overcoat.

"*Viola!*" she says, still sixty below zero and removin' my arm from around her waist. "Go then and see that friends. I am as of nothing to you since we have enter the New York. Oh, *oui!* Perhaps then some of the friend are the mesdames, *n'est-ce pas?*"

"There you go again!" I says, grabbin' hold of a chair and sittin' down nearby. "You're always puttin' interior motives on everything I do! They ain't no dames got nothin' to do with this — these friends of mine is all members of the male's sex. Why, Jeanne, since I first seen you I ain't even glanced at another woman. I don't even read magazines which has dames on the cover, and my own sisters would have to identify themselves before I'd even speak to 'em! I'm crazier about you than the Kaiser is about peace, and they is few knows it bet-

ter than you. If you feel that way about it, I'll forget my pals and me and you will have a party all by ourselves!"

Well, Joe, with them few remarks I go over to the crib and start to rockin' my baby. Jeanne gets up and comes over to me and in a second I am wearin' her arms around my neck.

"*Allons, je plaisantais!*" she smiles. "Go then and see those friend. Of the certain they would desire to look upon *mon brave.* Bring them here so Jeanne can see them too." She stops and draws up the corners of her mouth till any rosebud in the world would of took one look and quit cold. "Or — or — is it then that Edouard would not like his friends to meet poor Jeanne?"

Joe, I grabbed her up tight till she hollered, and I had some difficulty with my throat on account of my Adam's apple gettin' loose and bobbin' around, whilst at the same time my eyes gets kinda damp.

"I don't want them to meet you, hey?" I

hollers. "Why, them big stiffs never seen nothin' like *you* in their lives, and one guy has been to the Grand Cañon! The minute they lay a eye on you I'll have to keep 'em apart so's they can't hatch up no plot to assassinate *me!* I'll be back in a hour at the most."

Well, Joe, we was half a hour sayin' good-by.

I went downstairs to get a taxi and they is a lotta kids runnin' around sellin' papers and yellin' that Germany is beggin' for peace. A fat guy which is on his way over to get theatre tickets at the counter almost bumps into me.

"Do you hear that?" he hollers in my ear. "Isn't that great? Germany is ready to quit!" He dances around. "I pray to Heavens that's true and nothing will come up to stop the negotiations. Why, this infernal war has ruined my business and —"

"Aw, shut up!" I says. "You guys oughta be interned somewheres! What

d'ye mean Germany wants to quit? Why the hell shouldn't them big tramps wanna call it off, when they're gettin' the tar licked outa 'em? Look at all them guys has did since they started this thing four years ago. Look at the women and kids they killed — and worse, look at the towns they burned, look at the prisoners they tortured, the hospitals they bombed, and a million other things which nobody heard tell of till them guys got in the field! Ask the people of Belgium and France whether *they* want peace now — them's the birds that oughta be considered, not *you* guys. Ask the marines and doughboys which has gone through Hell over there so's you and your kind won't have to, if *they* want peace! Sure, they want peace — they wanna piece of the Kaiser, a piece of the Crown's Prince, and a piece of all them rotten Huns! That's the peace we want and that's the only peace we wanna consider. The Kaiser had his fling, now it's *our* turn, and, believe me,

"The Kaiser had his fling, now it's *our* turn." *See page* 172

buddy, we'll make them babies pay triple for everything they done! When Pershing's gang gets into Berlin and them bums has been taught a lesson that their *great-grandchildren* won't never forget, then it'll be time to talk peace!"

Well, Joe, this guy gets as red as a three-alarm fire and stares at me with his mouth as open as Bronx Park. They is quite a little crowd collected and when I get through, what do they do but let forth a cheer which brung everybody within hearin' distance on the run!

"Why, I —" he stammers. "Why — I — I should think you'd welcome peace! Especially being a soldier. There will be no more of this horrible bloodshed and —"

"They won't, hey?" I hollers. "Don't kid yourself! They'll be barrels of it — but it'll be German! Peace, hey? The little kids in Belgium and the poor women of France with their men away at the front — *they* begged them German hellhounds

for peace when they come rushin' through like drunken roughnecks and — say! I can't talk about it no more! I get crazy when I think of the things them guys done. I wish I was back there now. I —" Joe, I stopped and grabbed him by the arm. "Hey!" I says. "How many Liberty Bonds have you got?"

"I'm up to the neck with them now," he says. "And —"

"Well, that's better than bein' up to the neck in the mud of a front-line trench!" I says. "I see they's a booth over there. I'll take another one if you do — what d'ye say?"

Joe, they was a dame in the crowd and she breaks through and holds out a handful of books to this guy.

"C'mon!" she says. "Take at least a hundred-dollar bond. Show this man that you appreciate that he has fought for you and yours!"

Joe, he looks at me and he looks at the

crowd, which is no more interested in the thing than a kid at his first circus.

"Why, this is an outrage!" he says, blusterin' up. "It's nothing but a holdup. I've taken all the bonds I can afford. The idea of being placed in such an embarrassing position by —"

"Yeh?" I butts in. "Well, I was in a embarrassin' position myself a few months ago. I was ten feet from a German trench at two in the mornin', with but a automatic between me and heaven! I was out there so's that a couple of years from now maybe *your* home would be safe from the rottenest bunch of dogs that ever infested the earth. I expect to go back there again. What will the boys think if I tell them that you guys over here ain't willin' to stand behind them with every nickel you got?"

Joe, this guy stares at me, looks at the wounded stripes, and bangs his hands together.

"C'mon!" he bellers all of a sudden.

"By Heavens, you're all right, son! I'll start it off with a thousand! Who's next?"

Well, Joe, they was quite a rush, and in ten minutes I have sold thirty-five thousand dollars' worth of bonds, takin' a coupla hundred dollars of 'em myself for my baby. Joe, I can no more afford them extry two hundred than you can afford to buy a country place on Fifth Avenue, but I'm out to beat the Kaiser if it takes my last breath, my last nickel, and my last drop of blood! You big stiff, I hope you got a fistful of them bonds yourself — if you ain't, I'll run you ragged when I meet you in Berlin!

Joe, I just seen in the papers what Pres. Wilson's comeback to the Kaiser was. Oh, boy!!! He told it to 'em, hey? Say, Joe, he is some baby to be head of the U. S. right now and a much greater man than even Buffalo Bill was in his palmiest days and that's sayin' a lot, because Buffalo Bill was always my favorite hero in olden times gone by.

Well, Joe, I have got to close now on account of Jeanne askin' me have I turned author and stop writin' letters for Heaven's sake for a minute. I will tell you what happened the night we went out in New York at my earliest convenience.

Joe, since we come into this war I'll bet they is one guy the Kaiser is good and sore at and that's Columbus, hey?

Yours truly,

First Lieutenant EDWARD EDISON HARMON.

(I see the Liberty Loan went over. Joe, it's a good thing I made that speech in the hotel lobby, hey?)

II

Somewheres in a Harlem Flat.

DEAR JOE: Well, Joe, I see where Bulgaria has called it a day and Austria and Turkey is yellin' for the cops also. I guess I better hustle back to France so's the war won't be a failure with everybody walkin' out on it like that, hey? Joe, don't get the idea that the war is all over yet on account of that stuff, because it ain't — not by a long shot! It's the beginnin' of the ninth all right, and it looks like we got the game all sewed up in a bag, but keep your seat, Joe, they's a few more guys gotta be fanned yet. We knocked Hindenburg outa the box, Foch is pitchin' world-series ball, Pershing is battin' around .1000, and every other guy in the line-up is hittin' 'em all over the lot. We sent the Crown's Prince to the showers

long ago with nothin' left but his uneyform, and when the Kaiser tried to pinch-hit with that peace offer we sent Wilson in against him and the big Dutchman fanned on three pitched balls, the same bein' "Fight-to-Finish!" Joe, wait till Pershing comes to bat in the last half of the ninth. The bases will be crowded with leathernecks and doughboys and — oh, lady!!! — when he hammers out that Texas leaguer we'll all swarm over the Berlin home plate like flies on a upset sugar bowl!

Well, no doubt you are anxious to hear what befell me the night me and Jeanne and my baby landed in New York. Well, Joe, I went outside the hotel after my spectacular rally for the Liberty Loan and hired a taxi with the command to whisk me to McDermott's place up on Lenox Avenue where you and me and the rest of them ale and pinochle hounds was wont to while away the idle hours. (That's class, hey, Joe? — I got it off of a steamship folder.) Well,

in less than no time, or about a half hour, I was outside the place. I tipped the chauffeur half a buck and he swooned on me, and for all I know he's out there thankin' me yet. Joe, I have been usin' that French dough for so long that I thought I was givin' him a twenty-five centime piece which is about a nickel and would of been ample. However, by the time I found out my fatal mistake I was inside of McDermott's.

Well, Joe, I burst right into a auction tourney in full bloom. They is a new bartender on the job, and he don't know me, and the rest of them guys is so busy playin' that they don't even look up. Among them present is Eddie Stevens, Cutey Miller, Tornado Eagan the box fighter, and Phil Bloom the bookmaker. They has just been a deal and the biddin' is in full swing.

"Two-fifty!" says Stevens.

"Three-fifty!" hollers Miller.

"I got everything stopped," remarks Bloom, like he always does. "I pass!"

"Three-sixty!" bawls Stevens.

"My Gawd!" says Miller, lookin' around and seein' me. "See what's here!"

"I don't care what's here," says Stevens, without raisin' his eyes from the cards, "as long as they's a ace of spades in that blind!"

Well, Joe, Miller, Eagan, and the other guys jump up, and the cards goes all over the floor. For about ten minutes I shook more hands than Roosevelt ever seen. Alongside of the reception I got Pershing would be treated cold if he walked up Fifth Avenue. It reminded me of the old days when I was czar of the pitchers and used to walk forth on the diamond raisin' my cap with a nonchalantly air to the cheers of from 25,000 to 32,000 frantic admirers, accordin' to the weather and who we was playin'. Well, Joe, they are all tickled silly to meet me except Eddie Stevens which would kick about the accommodations in heaven, not that he'll ever get the chance. He says I have spoiled a 400 spade hand on him by

comin' in just then. Miller runs to the phone and starts callin' up the rest of the gang, and invitations to go different places is showered at me by the barrel.

"Let's step into the back room," says Phil Bloom, "where we can talk without all these plumbers and the like buttin' in."

"Whose deal is it?" says Stevens, shufflin' the cards again. "I'm 8.40 in the hole. We can hear this guy's adventures next Friday. C'mon, I got a hour to play, and —"

Joe, ain't that bird the limit? Always thinkin' about money, and friendship to him means no more than a quarter's worth of nickels means to Rockefeller. Well, I quailed him with a glance, and he folleys the rest of us into the back room where chairs is drawed up, and in come a waiter.

"What are you gonna have, Ed?" says Bloom. "They's no limit — anything up to and includin' champagne!"

"I'll have a shine," I says. "I ain't drinkin' a thing and —"

With that, Joe, the whole bunch of them butts in and claims I gotta take somethin' right then if I never did before in my life, because this is a rare occasion and etc., and fin'ly I says all right, I'll have a seidel of Scotch.

"I'm sorry, sir," says the waiter. "It's against the law to serve intoxicants to any man in uneyform!"

Well, what d'ye know about that one, hey, Joe?

"All right!" says Stevens. "Give him some beer then."

"I can't serve that either!" says the waiter, presentin' us with a grin. "That's intoxicatin' too."

"Well, that's a new one on me!" says Stevens. "If they's any alcohol in beer, they must of put it in this mornin'— I know *I* never been able to get no bun on with it! Well, bring us *our* stuff anyways, and —"

"I'm sorry, sir," says the waiter, still in complete possession of the grin, "but it's

against the law to serve any alcoholic liquors at the same table where there is a soldier."

"He ain't no soldier — where d'ye get that stuff?" bawls Stevens, on the verge of bein' enraged. "Look at that baby's uney-form; he's a — a — general or a ensign — or somethin' of the sort. They was five guys saluted him to death here not a minute ago! C'mon, shoot the stuff —"

"I'm sorry, sir," says the waiter, "but —"

"Get outa here!" bawls Stevens, "or they'll be another guest at the morgue!" He turns around to the gang and points at me. "What d'ye know about *this* big stiff, eh?" he says. "On account of him comin' back we can't get no brew. He always did crab everything when he was here before, and now —"

Well, Joe, I got up and stood over this baby!

"Am I to take it that I am a unwelcome visitor here?" I says in a cold, deadly voice.

Joe, the rest of 'em jumps up and the air

"Am I to take it that I am a unwelcome visitor here?" I says in a cold, deadly voice.
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is full of exclamations of undyin' love and affection for me and what they said about Mister Stevens would never of give his parents a swelled head. I stopped the uproar with one wave of my hand.

"Shut up!" I says. "I'm talkin' to Stupid, here!" Joe, I stuck my face right into his like I used to do with the squareheads. "Am I welcome or am I not, hey?" I says.

Well, Joe, Stevens looks at the gang for a minute, and then he looks at me, and then he looks at the floor.

"Well, Ed," he says all of a sudden, holdin' out his hand, "I certainly am glad to see you! When did you get back? You must tell us some of your adventures and the like. Well, well, well! Why, Ed — why — I'd rather see you than have a drink!"

With that, Joe, the bloodshed was prevented.

Well, Joe, I wanna tell you somethin' about this "No-booze-for-the-soldiers"

thing. At first it made me sore the same as it prob'ly has a old bar buzzard like you, but after thinkin' it over I'm satisfied it's a good thing and perfectly right, like everything else Uncle Sam has did. Joe, suppose all the doughboys was rollin' around the streets stewed, that would be a fine-lookin' sight for them pro-German guys, wouldn't it? I don't claim they would all get stewed, but some of them would the same as they did in civilian life, and you know few hates a guy with a bun on worse than a drinker himself. Then, again, a guy with a uneyform on feels he's a little better than a guy in citizen's clothes, and they's no reason why he shouldn't, only if he got hittin' up the stuff his chest and head would be gettin' bigger and bigger every minute, and the first thing you know he'd wanna lick everybody in the place on account of him bein' a soldier. (You know what a cop with a bun on is.) Also, a drunken soldier is liable to tell important secrets like when

he's gonna sail and how many is goin' with him, and the like, without knowin' what he's doin'. They is one other thing too, Joe — A U. S. soldier don't have to take off his hat to no man either as a fighter or a pleasant sight to look upon. He oughta be stiff and neat all the time, and he oughta think that they's a lotta mothers which has boys in France watches him as he walks along the street, and if he's stewed he's givin' 'em pain that they shouldn't have, because they can't help thinkin' I wonder if my boy's doin' that too? Joe, they is nothin' heroic in a guy rollin' from one side of the street to the other with " U. S." on his collar. The big stiff oughta be shot!

Joe, it's a fine thing, and you may have noticed it, that they is less stews on view in the U. S. army than any in the world. Our boys has give up the brew without a yelp, the same as they give up everything that was asked of them, and a drunken doughboy is as rare a sight either here or in France as a

squarehead that will stand up before a American bay'net with the odds even. Anybody that says anything else is a liar and helpin' the Kaiser!

Well, Joe, most of the old bunch which gimme indifferent support whilst I was pitchin' for Mac is now workin' in the shipyards here and there. This guy Stevens, which was born with a hammer in his hand and has been knockin' ever since, says that if them guys can't hit a rivet any better than they could hit a baseball they will never give the Kaiser insomnia with the ships *they* turn out. Then Phil Bloom says Lefty Regan, the big busher which lasted somethin' like two innin's with the Cubs, has got a commission as a lieutenant in the Intelligence Division. Well, Joe, at that Stevens bust out laughin' and says Lefty was a boob to accept that when he could of beat it by seven miles. I says "How?" and Stevens says Lefty could of got made Field Marshal in the Ignorance Division if he had only

asked for a examination. Can you beat that guy, Joe? I bet he thinks Niagara Falls is the bunk!

Well, Joe, I told a lot of my adventures and everybody listens with the most undivided attention. Everybody but Stevens. This guy kept buttin' in every few minutes with sarcastical remarks. He claims he read some of my letters to you in a magazine and they must of fed me nothin' but opium whilst I was in France. He says if I got wounded I must of fell outa the wagon that takes you to the guardhouse and I win all the medals in a raffle. Joe, they was three or four times when I would of bust him in the nose, only a U. S. officer has got to be dignified and then again Stevens is big enough to snap at Willard and you know it. Fin'ly I says:

"Well, boys, this here's all very fine, but I gotta leave. I promised the wife I'd be right back and —"

"What wife?" sneers Stevens.

Oh, boy!!!

Joe, I got up and pushed Phil Bloom outa the way so's he wouldn't be hit by no fallin' bodies.

"Mine!" I says.

Joe, he laughs kinda nasty.

"Stop it!" he says. "If you gotta wife, I gotta million bucks! Any dame that would wed you —"

Well, Joe, you'd be surprised how life in the army toughens a guy's muscles. It only took a simple left swing to put Mister Stevens on the floor, and he went down so hard he would of fell in front of a subway express if the floor hadn't been concrete. He is out about a minute, and when he come to life he gets up, rubs his chin and staggers around the room.

"I told McDermott to fix that ceilin'," he murmurs. "I knowed sooner or later it was gonna cave in on somebody! Was they many killed?"

Well, Joe, I explained to him that the ceilin' was still there and it was me that hit him and not no earthquake. I also throwed in the information that I had a right hand besides a left and I would be pleased to let him have it if he didn't apologize in full view of the audience.

"Ed," he says, "you win! If you put me away with a punch, I'd be a idiot to go any farther with you. I don't know what started this, because I'm still a little hazy, but whatever it is I take it back! Also, I wanna thank you for not hittin' me in the eye. If that wallop had hit me *there,* I'd be a fine-lookin' guy to go out with a dame to-night, hey? Why —"

"All right!" I butts in. "We're all liable to make mistakes. All is forgiven. Now you go and get that dame you're goin' out with, and, Bloom — you get Mrs. Bloom and Miller and Eagan can get their girls and we'll all go down to my hotel and get

Mrs. Harmon. Then we'll have dinner and the rest of the night will be devoted to —"

Tornado Eagan butts in. "Count me out," he says. "I gotta fight to-night for the Red Cross."

"What d'ye mean?" I says. "I thought the scrap in Europe was for the Red's Cross. They is lots of them over there and—"

He give a bum imitation of a grin. "They is a big boxin' carnival at Madison Square to-night, Ed," he says, "and the gate goes to the Red Cross. I'm gonna fight Knockout Smith, the lightweight champ. We stall four rounds for nothin' and —"

"Wait a minute!" I says. "If you're so anxious to fight, why don't you go in the army, hey? You're in the draft age and you —"

"— And I report to Camp Upton to-morrow mornin'!" he says. "I got my ticket to-day."

With that he lets forth a sigh and looks

out the window. "Ain't that tough?" he winds up.

Well, Joe, I jumps up and bangs him on the shoulder.

"Tough?" I hollers. "What d'ye mean tough? Why, you little stiff, you oughta be tickled silly! You're gettin' a chance to fight for your country like — like Nathan Hale and — and me did. You call it *tough,* hey? What are you — yellah?"

Joe, he throwed over a chair gettin' up.

"Ed," he says, as white as milk should be, "you can get away with that because I like you and you done a lot over there. But you got me all wrong! I'd give my left arm to go over to France, and I may give both of 'em before I get through. That ain't the point. I got a mother and a invalid sister to think of, and you know it. You know why I ain't married to Mamie Young, too — I can't throw 'em over and I ain't makin' enough to keep us all. Now I'm goin' in the army and how the hell can

I keep Mom and Sis and even the little I'd need for myself on thirty bucks a month — hey?"

Well, Joe, that was different, and when I looked at his little, earnest, pale face I seen they is more than a few laughs in this thing they call life!

"Well," I says, "that lets you out. You can claim exemption, can't you? You're there with dependents."

"D'ye think I'm yellah?" he snarls. "I don't want no exemption, and Mom wouldn't let me claim it if I did. She's as game as they make 'em. Why, say — d'ye know what she tells me? She claims she can get a job as saleslady somewheres and — why, say, Ed — Mom's sixty-eight years old!"

Well, Joe, the gang all starts lookin' at the pictures on the wall and Miller starts a nervous whistle. Even Stevens found trouble with a bad cough, and Phil Bloom gets somethin' in his eye.

"Say!" says Bloom, "I got it! A big benefit might —"

"Shut up!" snarls Eagan. "My mother would kill me dead if I took any charity — we're Irish, you big stiff!"

Joe, they is quite a silence, and I thought I'd break it up.

"Have you got any chance with this champ, if the fight was level?" I says, more to change the subject than anything else.

"Chance?" snorts Eagan. "I've chased that bum all over the country for six months. I can knock him kickin' any time I want! I got a draw with him in Boston eight months ago, and he wouldn't get in the ring with me for a sure-enough scrap since then if he was paid a thousand bucks for every punch he missed. Don't you ever read the papers?"

"I been in France," I says, "and the Paris papers didn't print a line about it, prob'ly on account of the war. Why don't you bounce him to-night then?"

"Huh!" says Eagan. "This here's a exhibition bout. Neither of us has trained for it. I practically promised to stall, and I don't believe in this double-cross stuff." He gets up and reaches for his hat. "Say!" he says, "why don't you guys come down and see this thing to-night? You can bring the ladies along, because they won't see nothin' rougher than they would at a checker tourney. You can get good seats for five bucks the each and you'll be helpin' a good cause. You ain't got nowhere particular to go, and it's your last chance to see me in action. C'mon, Ed — do it for me! Everybody knows you now, and I'd be tickled silly to introduce you at the ringside. C'mon — be a good guy!"

Well, Joe, you know this kid Tornado Eagan. He don't look no more like a fighter than I look like Napoleon, and with that kid Irish face of his he's got a way of askin' for somethin' that would make Foch throw away his commission if he asked him

to. Besides, that stuff about his mother, and you know his sister Mary — the little paralyzed kid we used to wheel to school — well, Joe, it got me, and I was tryin' to figure a out for him. Then, again, I ain't seen a box fight since the Reds win a pennant, you might say, and I always was crazy about the game, so I made up my mind quick.

Well, Joe, the rest was all with me except this guy Stevens, which claims he don't wanna see no fake fight. I says if he don't go he'll see a real one and they'll be two guys in it. I'll be one and I'll give him three guesses on who'll be the other. He says one guess is enough and climbs into the taxi.

In half a hour, Joe, we are down at my hotel. They have all brung their wives or sweethearts with 'em, all dressed up like the City Hall durin' a Elks convention. The women goes crazy over Jeanne and my baby, and the males all stand around in what is knowed as open-eyed admiration, lookin'

at Jeanne. Stevens says he wished he had gone into the army, and his girl gets sore and says the war ain't over yet. I fixed up a mêlée with the greatest of difficulty. Well, Joe, for two bucks and found I hired a chambermaid which called me colonel to watch my baby whilst we went out for a coupla hours. It took me a other hour to get Jeanne to see into it. Whilst all this is bein' had, Phil Bloom, the honest bookmaker, disappears. By the time we are ready to leave and the dames has all raved over Jeanne's new clothes from Paris, Bloom comes back. He claims they is somebody has got to see me right away in the pink and green room of the hotel, and when I got there I liked to swoon. Joe, they is a feed there fit for Billy Sunday or Douglas Fairbanks with more waiters mobilized than I ever seen in my life!

Well, Joe, I don't know where they get the idea that the Jewish people is crazy about money, because that feed must of shot

at least $200 all to pieces, not countin' the tips to everybody but the stockholders of the hotel. After we have got through with the finger bowls and thankin' Bloom, we all set sail for Madison Square Garden to see the bouts for the Red's Cross.

Joe, they is no more people packed in there than they is in South Dakota, but with the aid of Tornado Eagan, I managed to get ringside seats. All the big leaguers from the governor to the head waiter at Hector's is there, also all the swell society dames which is helpin' the Red's Cross. Jeanne and the rest of these dames is as excited as a yegg awaitin' his first sentence, and Mrs. Bloom says she hopes it won't be brutal, and I says I hope it will. Jeanne says for me to stop talkin' to Mrs. Bloom, which is a good looker, and Stevens wants to know if me and Jeanne is gonna scrap for the Red's Cross too. The six seats between us saved him.

Well, Joe, about ninety people is introduced from the ring, and Joe Humphreys is

doin' the announcin', and fin'ly his eyes falls on me. I tried to duck, Joe, because you know how I hate public notoriety and the like, but he tells the crowd I am there, and, oh, boy!!! Joe, they was a cheer went up which come near shakin' that bareback dancer off of Madison Square roof. Well, Joe, that's the wages of bein' popular, so nothin' would do but I gotta climb through the ropes and make a little speech myself before all them frantic thousands consistin' of bankers, bricklayers, judges, yeggs, society guys, and etc. Well, Joe, I told them what wonderful work the Red's Cross is doin' in France and the like and I feel sure baseball will come back unto its own and I think woman's suffrage is a good thing, if they don't go too far with it, and how I got wounded and the like, fin'ly leavin' the ring amidst the wildest applause. They is some more guys gettin' ready to be introduced with waiters' suits on and all, but havin'

seen me the crowd is all through and hollers for the fighters.

Well, Joe, they is four or five preliminaries, and none of 'em would of made no stenographers or sweet young graduates cover their eyes and moan at the slaughter. Them babies acted like they was all roommates or brothers, and it was a felony to hit each other. Outside of showin' some new dance steps they did nothin' but fall into a fond embrace every second. If they was any blows struck, I failed to see them. By the time the star bout between Tornado Eagan and the champ is to be put on, the crowd is gnashin' its teeth and yellin' murder. They have paid out their good dough to see fights and not dancin' exhibitions, and if the big scrap ain't rough it looks like they'll be a busy time for the cops.

Joe, they is a long delay, and Joe Humphreys leans down and whispers to me that the champ is stallin' and may not go through

with the scrap, because he now claims he thought he was to box a exhibition with a sparrin' partner. He figures Eagan too dangerous, and the crowd is hootin' and hissin', and excitement was at its height, as the guy says. All of a sudden one of Eagan's handlers pushes his way through to me and says the Tornado wants to see me right away in his dressin' room. I folleyed him back.

Well, Joe, inside the dressin' room Eagan is all set for the ring. His face is the color of a dress shirt and he's as nervous as a race horse full of hop. The handlers are runnin' after him tryin' to get a bath robe on him and he don't even notice 'em. The minute he sees me it's different.

"Git outa here!" he bawls at the handlers.

"The crowd's yellin' murder, kid," says one of 'em. "And —"

Eagan's answer was to throw the water bucket at him, and they all blowed.

Well, Joe, with that Eagan drags me into a corner and tells me that he's up against the toughest thing he ever faced in his life and he's come out winner in fifty-four mêlées in a twenty-four foot ring. The champ has sent him word that he wants him to take one on the chin and dive in the fourth round so's it'll look like a clean knockout and therefore boost the champ's stock 100 per cent, because Eagan is the leadin' contender for the title. In return for this little favor the champ will support Eagan's mother and sister till he comes back from the war. The champ's argument is that even if Eagan scored a knockout himself, which would make him lightweight champion of the world, it wouldn't make no difference, because Eagan has got to go into the army the next day, and the title would get him no more dough than a buck private. They'll make it look like a fight till the fourth round, then the champ will shoot one over and Eagan takes the count. The crowd is

satisfied and Eagan can go into the army knowin' his folks will be taken care of.

Well, Joe, Eagan says he never throwed a fight in his life, and he don't know what to do. He knows he can knock out the champ as sure as he knows J. P. Morgan is well off, but if he wins he's throwin' down his mother and sister, because what will they do whilst he's in France? He can't even give 'em any sugar from this fight, because he's fightin' for the Red's Cross for nothin'. On the other hand, why not take the fall and be done with it, knowin' his folks will be sure of eats and the like till he comes back?

Joe, he puts it up to me, and I don't know what to tell him. The thing is too big for me, and before we can argue it over they send for him. He flings on the bath robe and steps to the door.

"Ed," he says, "I made up my mind. T'hell with my rep and everything else — I owe my mother somethin', hey? Every guy does. Ed, I'd rather lose my arm than

do this, but — *don't bet no money on me,* no matter what the odds is. I think the champ's gonna win by a knockout. S'long!"

With that he's outa the door and up the aisle before I can stop him!

Well, Joe, I get back to the ringside, and the bettin' is 8 to 5 on the champ. Phil Bloom takes five thousand on Eagan before I can open my mouth, and — well, Joe, I bet a thousand myself — never mind which way.

The champ sits in his corner, grinnin' like a wolf at his friends, and Eagan sits on the other side rubbin' his feet in the rosin and lookin' straight at the floor. He don't even glance up when Bloom and the gang hollers to him. He's as white as the canvas under his feet.

Well, Joe, the crowd had no cause to complain about that scrap as you no doubt have seen from the papers. The champ beat Eagan all over the ring, hittin' him with

everything but the referee and it looked like only the bell saved him from a knockout. The mob is on its feet yellin' like maniacs and some of the women is a trifle hysterical when the boys went to their corners after the toughest three minutes of maulin' I ever seen in my life.

Joe, the bell rings for the second round, and they feel each other out for a minute. Then the champ is short with a left swing to the jaw and they fall into a clinch against the ropes right over us. Eagan looks desperate, and the champ is still grinnin'. He ain't even got his hair mussed, whilst Eagan looks like he's been sparrin' with a buzz saw. I hear 'em talkin' to each other as the referee runs over to break 'em.

"You little bum!" pants the champ, "I could of trimmed you anyways. I was a fine simp to make a deal with you. Hurry up and take the dive, I gotta date."

"Shut up!" hisses Eagan. "It's bad

enough now. If it wasn't for my mother, I'd knock you kickin'."

"Well, your old lady's out in front," sneers the champ, pullin' away. "C'mon — show her what a fancy high diver you are!"

Joe, this here champ never in his life made a more expensive remark even when he asked his wife to wed him. Eagan straightens up with a snarl, shoves him a foot away with one lunge and shoots a left to the jaw from somewheres down around his heels. The champ staggers back against the ropes and Eagan puts a left and right to the face. Zam!!! down goes the champ sprawlin', and the crowd begins smashin' chairs, hats, and everything else, includin' their lungs. Eagan dances around this guy whilst the referee starts the count, and I must say this here champ was game because he's on his feet at "eight" staggerin' around, punch drunk but willin'. The crowd stops

yellin' for one second — they're seein' a title changin' hands. Eagan measures the champ as cold and businesslike as if he was a punchin' bag. Sock!!! A right hook to the jaw and over in a corner is a ex-lightweight champion, dead to the world!

Oh, boy!!!

Joe, the Battle of the Marne was quiet alongside of what took place in the Garden then! The well-known pandemonium, or whatever they call it which is always breakin' loose at political conventions and the like, broke loose again, and them ten or twenty thousand yellin' maniacs had a field day.

Eagan has flopped into a chair in his corner and buried his face in his hands. Me and Bloom climbs through the ropes and he looks up — weepin'!

"I'm a yellah dog!" he moans. "I throwed down me own mother! I told you guys to bet against me, and I prob'ly lost all your dough. Ed, I couldn't help it! I

knowed I could trim that baby and I never laid down in my life. I let him beat the life outa me — I give him every chance to knock me cold in a level way, and when I seen I could take all he had — Ed, I hadda bounce him!"

"You didn't lose nothin'!" I says. "Me and Bloom and the rest of the gang cleaned up on you! Your mother and sister will never want for nothin', because they're gonna live with Jeanne. Maybe your mother can give her some tips on how to bring up a infant. I lost my mother, kid — well, a long time ago, and — well, kid, maybe your mother won't mind adoptin' another son, hey?"

Joe, he almost knocked Bloom through the ropes jumpin' up.

"You guys *won* on me?" he hollers. "After I told you I was gonna lay down?"

"Sure!" I grins back. "I knowed once you got in the ring and this champ stung you, you'd forget everything for the minute

except trimmin' him. I knowed you had it on him whenever you wanted to cut loose. And as for that layin' down thing — hell, you're Irish, ain't you?"

Yours truly,
First Lieutenant EDWARD EDISON HARMON.

SIXTH INNING

SOMEWHERE IN HARLEM

I

A Claremont Ave. Port.

DEAR JOE: Well, Joe, I have at last got a home for myself in a neat but not gaudy part of New York. I also have quite a staff now, with Jeanne and my baby and Tornado Eagan's mother and Tornado Eagan's sister. Joe, it is quite a expense and I am givin' 'em more support than the Giants ever give me when I was pitchin' baseballs, but it is worth it! Jeanne and Tornado Eagan's relations gets along like noodles and soup and Jeanne is teachin' Mrs. Eagan French in return for a course in how to raise my baby. I think Mrs. Eagan is gettin' the worst of it myself, but she ain't sayin' a word, bein' a glutton for punishment like the Tornado was. Joe,

Eagan's mother is a prince if they ever was one, and I am tickled silly that I have adopted her. You know after the Tornado was drafted, Joe, they was left alone in the world without a nickel, and his mother wouldn't let him claim exemption. Well, Joe, when I offered to take care of 'em she reared up on her hind legs and claims the Eagans come from County Claire, which must be up around Albany somewheres, and they never took no charity from no man. She says she will grab off a job as a saleslady or the like and her daughter, which is crippled, can take in sewin', and they'll get by, thank you! Joe, Eagan's mother is sixty-eight years old too; can you tie that? No wonder the Tornado was some scrapper, hey?

Well, Joe, I fin'ly got around it by sayin' the Tornado was gonna pay me for my trouble handsomely, and now every week I gotta mail myself a registered letter and claim it come from the Tornado. Joe, Mrs.

Eagan has fell for it, but his sister got me with the goods the other day when she asked me to let her see the handwritin' on the letter. Joe, I tried to hide it, but she grabbed hold of the envelope and then she looks out the window at New York and I developed a bad cough. Well, Joe, fin'ly I says is they anything I can get her, for want of somethin' to say, and she takes my hand and give it a grip like a man and says to beat it. Joe, I looked back when I was goin' out, and she was wipin' her eyes with a quarter's worth of lace, and I met Jeanne in the hall, and she asks me what's the matter with *my* eyes. I put my hand up, and they was wet, and I hope I don't get this Spanish Influence thing, because they must be somethin' wrong when water escapes from my eyes, hey, Joe?

Joe, the Tornado's sister is a knockout! Even prettier than she was when we all went to school on Amsterdam Avenue together. Remember me and you and a guy

named Goldberg used to fight it out to see whom would wheel her home in the chair? Well, she has got to be a woman now, Joe, and she is class — even Jeanne says so. I wished I had a bank roll, and I would take her to one of them big-league doctors and see if they wasn't some way of fixing her up. Anyways, I am gonna bring up the pick of my friends here, Joe, and see if I can't frame up a romantic love affair, or the like. Joe, she can speak French and etc. and talks English like a professor from Harvard, or one of them college joints. She done it all herself with books and etc., havin' nothin' else to do. Jeanne can't do enough for her, and we are all like one big happy family, except they is no fightin'.

Well, Joe, I will tell you how I come to get this flat when the last you heard I was livin' like a chorus girl in a swell hotel. Joe, you know that Rockefeller has got at least 1.25 more than I have, and Mary Pickford prob'ly makes more than they pay a

first lieutenant in the army, so when I put the Tornado's relations on my pay roll I had to forget about the high life. I went to one of them real-estate agents which is the go-between that ribs up the sucker for the landlord, and told him I wanted a flat where the nearest garage was eight miles away and the rent sounded like the owner was losin' money every month. I also says that the neighborhood has got to be respectable, the janitor respectful, and the rooms resplendant.

Joe, he was a little guy with a face like a hatchet and the composure of a scared rabbit.

"Sit down — ah, Major," he says, lookin' at my lieutenant's bars; "I got just what you want. Sixteen rooms and two baths, not countin' the maid's! This is the finest and —"

"Halt!" I says. "I got enough! Sixteen rooms, hey? What d'ye think I'm bringin' up here, a orphan asylum?"

"Too large, eh?" he says, grinnin'. "Well, we'll fix that. How about our apartments de luxe — one room and bawth?"

"I ain't no hermit neither!" I says. "They is a little over four in my family so far, and I want enough room for them to eat, sleep, prowl around, and the like."

"A little over four?" he says, kinda puzzled. "I don't understand."

"One of 'em's a infant," I says.

"Hmm!" he mutters, drummin' on the desk with a lead pencil. "Children, eh? That makes it bad."

Joe, I got up and stood over this bird.

"Listen!" I says, in a cold, deadly voice. "If you make any more cracks about my baby, it's gonna be terrible bad for *you* — get me?"

"No offense," he says, backin' away. "I beg your pardon! But the thing is that — well — eh — some of our tenants — er — there seems to be some slight objection to —

ah — children here and there — now, dogs are permitted — ah — but — not that I have any objections to children myself!" he winds up, still backin' away.

Joe, can you beat that? Can you imagine anybody objectin' to a little baby *anywheres?* If I thought that guy was tellin' the truth about New York, Joe, I'd be off of it for life and go and live some place where they is less electric lights and cabarets and more human bein's!

Before I can make any comeback, this guy goes on. "I think I have just the place for you," he says. "Seven rooms and bawth. Every modern convenience, restricted neighborhood, night and day service and I think I can get it for you for almost nothing."

"How much is that?" I says.

"About eighteen hundred and fifty," he tells me.

"The rent," I says, "not the address!"

"That's it," he says. "Eighteen hun-

dred and fifty dollars a year and facing the Hudson on beautiful, elegant Riverside Drive. Why, man, you can see Grant's Tomb from the bathroom window!"

"I don't look out the window when I'm takin' a bath," I says.

"Ha, ha!" he grins, pullin' a smile which looked like he had stepped on a nail. "You must have your little joke, eh? You boys are awfully funny — awfully funny!"

"Yeh," I says, "I showed Chaplin his first camera. Now, listen, I wanna place for about seventy-five berries a month — have you got that or ain't you?"

"Well," he says, slappin' his hands together, "of course for seventy-five dollars you can't expect — however, come with me!"

Well, Joe, with that he puts on a derby hat that was all the rage when Lincoln was runnin' for president, and motions for me to folley him. After a twenty-minute hike we turn into a terrible-lookin' street full of

pedlers and the like and stop in front of a joint that would make a stable look like Buckingham Palace. The name of this dive was the Delancey Arms. Joe, I don't blame De Lancey, because a guy would have to arm himself if he lived in that joint!

"It ain't much to look at," remarks the agent, "but it's quiet and refined."

My charmin' guide then rings a bell, and out hops a tough-lookin' bird in his shirt sleeves.

"That bell ain't no play-toy!" he growls. "What d'ye want?"

"I would like to see that vacant apartment on the third floor," says the agent. "Are you the janitor?"

"What d'ye *think* I am?" sneers the jovial stranger —"the mayor? Where did you git the report they was a empty flat here, hey?"

"That will do, my man," says friend agent, tryin' to look like a head waiter and missin' it. "I guess you don't know me."

He gives me a knowin' elbow in the ribs the while.

"That's *one* you win!" snarls this other guy. "And I'll give you another cinch bet — I don't give a mackerel's fur, either! Git off of my doorstep and take your patent milk can, or whatever your game is, somewhere else!"

Joe, the agent is as red as a three-alarm fire and almost chokin' besides, but before he can say anything they is a slight interruption. A guy starts out the hall with a suit case under his arm and the janitor jumps for him.

"Tryin' to duck the rent, hey?" he hollers at the new guy. "Where d'ye get that stuff?" Joe, with that he lets him have a back hander, and the poor boob does a dive in the vestibule. "I think you guys is all workin' together!" hollers the janitor, dancin' around us like a maniac. "One of you was to stall me whilst the guy inside beat it. I heard of that game. I seen it in

the papers. Git outa here or I'll call a copper and —"

Joe, they is another interruption. A big fat dame comes out and grabs the janitor by the arm.

"Aha!" she says, "I got you now! Where's them plumbers which was gonna fix my washtubs, hey? What happened to the steam heat, and when are you gonna fix the hole in my parlor floor? This is a terrible joint!"

"Take 'at moan to the landlord," says the janitor, tryin' to get away; "I ain't supposed to —"

"Tryin' to insult me, hey?" howls the fat dame. "Take that, you brute!"

Joe, she give him a slap in the face which must of woke up guys in Hoboken! I beat it down the steps, but the agent stood his ground, with his eyes and mouth as open as Bronx Park and lookin' like he was in a trance.

"What are *you* starin' at, stupid?"

shrieks the fat dame, makin' a pass at him.

Well, Joe, he tried to duck and trips, and if I hadn't of caught him he'd of bust his neck.

"This is awful!" he pants, when I have set him on his feet. "I'll have that woman put out of the house, and that janitor is the same as fired now. You come up and I'll show you that apartment. Go right ahead and I'll — ah — follow you. They can't scare me. Why —"

"Don't kid yourself!" I butts in. "I don't want no part of this joint. Quiet and refined, hey? Hurry up away from here before the rest of them gunmen comes out!"

Well, Joe, we fin'ly arrived at the place where I am livin' now, and — oh, lady!!! — what a difference! Joe, this is a regular place with runnin' hall boys, hot and cold radiators, and the like. The street is nice and quiet and sedate-lookin', and the entrance to the house has the genuine ready-money look. They is even elevators and the

like, and I wouldn't be ashamed to have Pres. Wilson call on me here, not that he's threatened to. They was hardly any trouble at all in agreein' on the price and five hours after the agent mentioned it I signed the lease and we was both so hoarse we could hardly talk.

Joe, I then went over to my bank where I have got all the dough I saved whilst a pitcher, and it's all shot to pieces at that since I got wed. All I been doin' of late is pester the payin' teller to death, and I guess if I go around for any more the cashier will claim he's runnin' a bank and not no pool on the election and either take it all out or let it be for a while. Anyways, I drawed out a thousand bucks and went back to the hotel and give it to Jeanne.

"Here," I says, droppin' the same in her lap, "go downtown with Mrs. Eagan and get some scenery for our new home. Get everything from a pie pan to a piano and stay away from the women's wear depart-

ment. I gotta go down to Washington and find out whether I report to Camp Upton or Berlin. I'll be back in a coupla days and I expect everything set when I get here!"

Well, Joe, they was a lot of fond fare-thee-wells and the like, and I grabbed a train for Washington. When I got down there them babies made me take a physical examination that would make a insurance doctor look careless. It lasted about a hour, and when them guys got through with me the head medico claims he don't think my wounds is healed enough yet and asks me does headaches ever give me any trouble. Joe, I says no more than they do anybody else, and did he ever hear of a guy which got pleasure outa 'em? With that he grins and says I better take thirty days' more furlough. Well, Joe, I thanked him, and he says am I the Lt. Harmon which done all them wonderful things on the battlefields of France and then wrote it up for the magazines, and I says yes, and he says he admires

my nerve. Well, Joe, I don't know which way he meant that, but I let it go.

Joe, I had to stay three days in Washington on account of all the Red's tape which has gotta be gone through once you get in the army, and fin'ly they gimme official permission to stall for a month more. Well, I was overjoyed at my luck and fled right back to New York to break the news to Jeanne.

Well, Joe, the minute I hit New York I stopped in and got some flowers and candy for Jeanne and some candy and flowers for Tornado Eagan's sister, and I also brung up somethin' for Tornado Eagan's mother — candy and flowers. Then, I remembered that I had forgot all about my baby and what kind of a newly made father is that which would neglect a infant, hey, Joe? Well, I am up against it on account of not knowin' what to present him with. If I bring him candy, Jeanne will bawl me out and take it away on the charge that it will make him sick. Joe, if I bring him flowers,

he's liable to eat it or the like and get sick anyways, and when it comes down to it, what do I know about buyin' gifts for a baby which is only seven weeks of old? Well, Joe, to make it short, I went into a department store and bought him a bicycle, and the dame which sold it to me says how old is my little boy? I says seven weeks, Joe, and she busts out with the giggles and hands me my change without another word. Whilst I was goin' out, Joe, I seen her lookin' after the bicycle and talkin' to the other dames, and they was all grinnin', but I am a married man and strange women's smiles is no more to me of late than six cents' worth of pennies is to J. P. Morgan!

Well, Joe, I didn't let Jeanne know the time I was comin', and when I reached my home I was a complete and pleasant surprise. Jeanne give one whoop and throwed her arms around me, and the bundles went all over the floor, spillin' out the candy and the like, and I walked on some American

Beauties which I paid two bucks the each for in a florist's run by Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves under the name of Cohen & O'Malley. Joe, we just stood there in fondly embrace like I had been away thirty-nine years instead of three days, and Mrs. Eagan brung over my baby so's I could kiss it. Tornado Eagan's sister says: "Welcome home!" and, Joe, I took one look around at Jeanne and my baby and all I had got, and Mrs. Eagan kissed me and called me "son" and — oh, boy!!! Well, Joe, they is no doubt that I am so lucky I could fall in the ocean without gettin' damp, and then I immediately commence to find fault with the new wall paper to keep from bustin' out cryin', which would prob'ly be viewed with amazement by each and all present.

Well, Joe, Jeanne laughs me outa givin' my baby the bicycle, although when I was seven weeks old I could of rode in a six-day race. She then takes me by the hand and

leads me from one room to another, and I am like a man in the midst of a nightmare. Everything was brand-new, and the women had fixed it up whilst I was away till the bridle sweets in a king's palace would look like a Second Avenue cellar alongside my flat. Joe, they is every improvement known to man or janitor, and Jeanne's room alone would make a movie queen leap in front of a subway express outa envy. Well, Joe, after I have looked it all over to my heart's content I present Jeanne with another kiss, and why not, and I says I don't know how she ever done it all on exactly a thousand dollars. Joe, at that Tornado Eagan's mother coughs and finds she is wanted in the kitchen, and Tornado Eagan's sister starts to read the telephone book with the same interest as if it was a French novel. Well, Joe, Jeanne gimme another kiss and says she has a surprise for me, because it wasn't even exactly a thousand dollars. Well, I says she is a wonder and if every

man had a wife like that they would be no bankrupts, and the like, and how much *was* it, as long as we are on the subject? Joe, she brings in the bill and don't tell *me* a man can't live without breathin', because I did for about three minutes! Joe, she was right when she says it wasn't exactly a thousand dollars, because the bill was for $2,849.75, and where I will get the rest of the dough to pay it is a subject for bigger minds than the one I got!

Well, Joe, as long as it was Jeanne done it I let it go, and we had a fine dinner without no bloodshed or the like. It is absolutely impossible for me to get sore at Jeanne no matter what she does, and I know because I have tried it. Joe, they will never be no neighbors hear no sounds of brawlin' outa our home because we sweetheart and darling ourselves to death all day long. Joe, the people in the next flat is different, though, and must of got wed for revenge or the like. They is a endless battle goin' on there night

and day, and I guess that's why Grant's Tomb is right opposite this house with "Let Us Have Peace!" on it. I don't blame Gen. Grant a bit!

Well, Joe, Tornado Eagan's mother comes runnin' in with a paper and claims it says the Kaiser abdicated, and I says that guy would do anything, and was they many killed? Joe, she says that means the Kaiser has quit and the war is all over with and now maybe the Tornado will come back and etc. Just then, Joe, they is a lotta whistles begins to blow, and they is bells ringin', and the like, and people goes rushin' through the streets wavin' flags and actin' like a flock of maniacs. I says I will go down and see what's the matter, and, Joe, I ain't no more than got down to the front door when they is a bunch of swell-lookin' dames from a college which is near here comes runnin' along yellin' the Kaiser is licked and hurrah for our noble soldiers and sailors and marines and the Y. M. C.

A. and Pres. Wilson and Gen. Pershing and etc. Well, Joe, the minute they seen me three of 'em dashes over, and before I got even a idea of what's comin' off they have gone to work and kissed me! Joe, the crowd stops and hollers hurrah, and I am struck dumb by surprise and can't move, and they is worse things than bein' kissed — besides, they was two others looked like they was comin' over too. Well, Joe, Jeanne is lookin' out the window and seen all, and in another minute she is standin' beside me, all flushed up and demandin' to know what I mean. Joe, I says I don't mean nothin', and I can't help it if women goes wild when they see me, and I leave it to you, can I, Joe?

Joe, the whole burg went ravin' crazy that night, and New York acted like a overgrown baby, and I don't blame 'em! With the Kaiser fin'ly throwin' up his throne and the Crown's Prince folleyin' his chin and retreatin', it ain't no wonder, hey?

Joe, wait till the first bunch of boys back from the front marches down Fifth Avenue — oh, lady!!!

Well, after we have got dinner all through with, Joe, Jeanne says she thinks it would be nice for me to bring all my friends up to my new home to celebrate peace and talk over what would be the best thing to do with the Kaiser and the Crown's Prince, not that Foch will ever ask us. Joe, just then what rings but the telephone, and Tornado Eagan's mother answers it, and in another minute is a trifle hysterical, because it's no less than the Tornado himself, actin' lightweight champion of the world and Camp Upton. Well, Joe, the Tornado's mother laughs and cries and what not, and fin'ly we find out that he has got leave and will come up if it's all right to me, because I am a officer and he's only a doughboy. I got on the phone and says to come arunnin', and for once the bars will be off. (Joe, I meant the bars on my shoulders, so you

can see I ain't past makin' a joke yet, hey?)

Well, Joe, with that I went out to round up my gang, and in all the days I been a a subject of New York I never seen the town like it was that night! All the election nights and New Year's Eves rolled into one, Joe, would be a hot session of chess alongside of the noise and etc. which was bein' had the night peace was declared. Guys which I never seen before in my life come up and grabbed my hand and acted like I had won the war single-handed, and at that I had more than a little to do with it, hey, Joe? As far as the fair's sex was concerned, Joe, they was dames which would of made Nero throw away his fiddle come up to me and kissed me silly, and it ain't bad when you get used to it, and I was gonna take a taxi, but I would be a sucker to keep under cover with all them things goin' on, hey, Joe?

Well, the very first bird I run into, Joe, is no less than G. Everhard Carrington,

which his old man owned Mac's club before he got bumped off in a railroad wreck a couple of years ago. You know this baby, Joe, he got $3.75 for every brick in the Woolworth Buildin', is husky enough to push over the same with one hand, and good-lookin' enough to pose for any collar ad in the world. Well, Joe, you know we was always as friendly as prohibition and Billy Sunday, but I was sorry to see he wasn't in uneyform. I figured a big husky like that, with all kinds of dough and no kinds of responsibilities, should of been sayin': "Good mornin', colonel!" the day the *Lusitania* got sunk, and even if the war is all over now, they ain't no excuse for him. Well, Joe, he run over and slapped me on the back, and the like, but I give him a very cold greetin' and asked him how he come out in the draft. Joe, he flushes all up and mumbles somethin' about bein' in Class 5-G and changes the subject at once. Well, I was thinkin' what a crime it was

that a well-to-do millionaire like him could use his influence to keep from takin' the boat ride across when a poor guy was handed a rifle the minute the draft birds come around to his number. I was gonna beat it away from him when he begins callin' me a hero and says he has read all about me and is proud to shake my hand. Joe, he ain't a bad guy at that, and you can't help likin' the kid, so I asked him to come up to the house and help me celebrate. I always was soft-hearted, and besides, this guy claims he has saved a lot of clippin's about me and etc.

On the way up, Joe, we talked about the baseball situation, which, of course, they ain't no such thing at present. I certainly am sorry they put the skids under the greatest game in the world outside of bay'net charges, but I'll tell the world fair it's comin' back strong now! A thing which was the national sport even before *I* was born can't be killed overnight, and then

they is millions of fans which is crazy to see me in action again, and I don't blame 'em. When the boys come back from France, they will be crazy for all kinds of amusements, and if the magnets of baseball will just sit tight and take their carbolic with a grin, they will be plenty of sugar in baseball for everybody right after the first U. S. doughboys march down Fifth Avenue!

Well, Joe, when we got to the house, I brung G. Everhard in and introduced him to Jeanne and my baby, and he give a bow and says somethin' in French which, whatever it was, it was a success, because Jeanne smiled all over and blushed like a rose. Then he tells me I am a lucky dog to have such a wife and baby, and I says so are they for grabbin' me, and then I went in and asked the Tornado's sister if she will meet a friend of mine. Well, Joe, at first she can't even consider it, because she is class like I told you and very bashful about

meetin' strangers on account of her bein' crippled, which is tough, and I wish I had enough dough to take her to some real joint where they would fix her up. Well, fin'ly she gives in for my sake and claims she'll be ready in fifteen minutes. I then went out and telephoned for the rest of the gang to come up, whilst G. Everhard, which served a term at Yale, or the like, entertains Jeanne by talkin' nothin' but French.

Pretty soon, Joe, Mrs. Eagan wheels in the Tornado's sister, and — oh, boy!!!! Joe, I heard G. Everhard give a gasp when he seen her, and he broke right off in the middle of a sentence, blushin' like a schoolgirl. Joe, I don't blame him, and, if it wasn't for Jeanne, I would prob'ly of fell for her myself! You never seen anything, let alone any *dame,* as pretty as her in all your life, and I don't care if you go to the movies night and day. She's got on a evenin' gown which made the innocent bystanders dizzy, and when she smiled a guy

with a weak heart would of passed away right then and there. Joe, from then on they was only two people in that room, or in the world as far as G. Everhard was concerned, and they was him and the Tornado's sister. I took the greatest of pains to see that they wasn't disturbed, Joe, because this guy has got a bank roll that would suffocate a rhinocerous, and I figured it would be a fine thing if him and little Mary Eagan got wed. Oh, you cupid, hey, Joe?

Well, in a few minutes the gang begins to arrive, and some of 'em must of figured I was givin' a revival or the like, because they brung along friends. Phil Bloom, the honest bookmaker, and his wife was there, bringin' with 'em a marine's officer which was as full of medals as catsup is of tomatoes. Then they was Cutey Miller, Eddie Stevens — which thinks everything is crooked, and his brother is a better judge of real estate than Columbus was — the future Mrs. Stevens (if Eddie is lucky), and

They was everything there from roast turkey to frankfurters and liberty cabbage (née sauerkraut). *See page* 241

— well, Joe, practically the whole gang which used to hang out in Martens & Jachens ale links, with their wives and the like. Tornado Eagan arrived late and was give a reception that would tickle Foch.

Joe, I called Jeanne in the kitchen and asked her what are we gonna give them babies, because after they get sick of lookin' at us they'll want some food and etc. She gimme a cute little smile and opened the ice box, and, Joe, they was everything there from roast turkey to frankfurters and liberty cabbage (née sauerkraut), and I bet when I get the bill they will hear me moanin' in Russia.

Joe, Mrs. Eagan and Jeanne bustles around gettin' this stuff in shape where it can be eat with the least trouble, and I go back to the gang where nothin' will do but I gotta tell all my hair-breadth experiences. I seen the marine's officer eyin' me kinda funny a coupla times, and I was forced to cut down the number of squareheads I

killed and the towns I took on account of him bein' there, but anyways I went over big and was applauded till the chandeliers shook. Then Cutey Miller, which would make Paderwiski drink carbolic when it comes to playin' the piano, obliged, and one of the girls got rid of a sentimental song entitled "I Miss My Dear Old Mother, but I Can Hit Father Every Time!" or somethin' like that. I was busy takin' care of new guests, Joe, and only heard the first part of it. Anyways, when she laid off they applauded her so much that it sounded like she was bein' kidded.

Well, Joe, you know that Eddie Stevens has got one of them rich vaseline tenor voices, and they is quite a demand for him to sing. He acts like a kid at a school festival for a minute, except he didn't bite his nails, but fin'ly he gets up and says he'll do what he can with a little thing he just dashed off and which Gus Edwards and Irving Berlin went hysterical with praise

over, and the Von Tilzer boys got up and left, gnashin' their teeth with jealousy, the minute they heard it. Joe, he says another publisher has sent a second-story man around to his hotel to try and steal the first verse. I asked him to quit it and let's hear the song, and he gets up, looks carefully around the room, opens the dumbwaiter door to see if it's harborin' any spies, and fin'ly lets forth the followin', entitled "Such Is Life":

I dashed into a restaurant as hungry as a bear,
And, like a ravin' maniac, I snatched the bill of fare.
The waiter says what will you have? — a beefsteak rare I pray!
He took my order, bowed his head, and slowly walked away.

CHORUS

But he never come back,
No, he never come back!
His sweet form I never seen more.
But his face I will break
If he ain't got that steak
When we meet on that beautiful shore!

Well, Joe, when he got through they was four guys had developed the hystericals and

the marine's officer fell off his chair in a fit of hee-hawin'. Stevens looks around and says ain't it a knockout, and I says it is all of that, and it must be great to be able to write songs, and he'll be the sensation of Broadway the minute that ballad gets out. Joe, Phil Bloom sneers and says they will prob'ly no doubt put Stevens in a insane asylum, if he ever tries to pull that song anywhere, and Stevens gets sore and hollers ain't that song funny. Bloom says yes, Joe, and it was even funnier twenty years ago when he first heard it, and if Stevens can write songs, *he* can make a locomotive. For a minute it looked like they would be a mêlée, Joe, but I managed to prevent it by the use of tact. I says I will bounce the both of 'em on their ears if they start anything, and they laid off at once.

Well, Joe, I asked the marine's officer what the globe and anchor on his cap stood for, and he says it means that the marines fights all over the world. Well, I says,

where do they go next week now that this war is over, and he thinks I'm kiddin' him and gets sore, offerin' to bust me in the nose, but is called off by cooler heads, mine bein' one of them. Well, to change the subject, I asked him where he got his medal. He says one night in Haty (if they is any such joint) he was actin' as a sentinel and ten of them Haty guys surprised and jumped him. He killed, wounded, or captured all of 'em, and the next mornin' what was his surprise to find a gold medal among his chow.

Joe, I got a medal myself, as you well know, and he asked me how I got mine. I wasn't gonna let them leather-necks have nothin' on the army, so I says one night in France I was guardin' a important trench all alone and the whole division was sleepin'. The captain comes to me and says I got the fate of maybe the entire Alleys restin' on my shoulders. He picked me out to guard the trench because he heard it rumored that I was addicted to insomnia,

and he wanted a guy which they would be no danger of him fallin' asleep on the job. Well, I says, there I stood alone at the edge of No Man's Land with the stars blinkin' down sarcastical at me and the moon risin' in all its glories, and the like. They is not a sound to be heard, but the soft whisper of the forty-five-centimeter guns which the squareheads is tryin' to pick me off with — the machine gunners and snipers havin' quit long ago, broken-hearted. (Joe, whilst I'm tellin' this they ain't a sound in that room. Everybody is watchin' me with their eyes and mouths as open as a Mobile crap game. I seen I had a good audience, so I went to it!) Suddenly, I says, they was twenty-six Germans sprang up outa the night and cast themselves at me, armed to the teeth with hand grenades, rifles, revolvers, ropes, trench knives, bay'nets, gas bombs, and the like. In the dull glint of the moon, which was now quite interested

in the thing, I even seen one guy sneak a bottle of carbolic acid and some chloride of mercury outa his pocket as they come at me. They was takin' no chances! Well, to make a long story short, I says, in fifteen minutes the ground was strewed with squareheads. I counted ten killed, four wounded, and I had took ten prisoners. They was only a scant two got away. That very night Gen. Pershing come all the way from Paris on a motorcycle to pin the medal on me.

Joe, when I got all through they was a dead silence. Phil Bloom took out his handkerchief and wiped his brow, and Eddie Stevens looks out the window and commences to whistle. But, Joe, the marine's officer presented me with a sneer.

"Hell!" he says, "that's nothin'—if you'd of been a marine, them other two guys would never of got away!"

Joe, after what them Devil Dogs done

over there, I guess he was pretty near right, hey?

Well, Joe, the party broke up about 3 a. m., and you couldn't expect it to last forever, and, as the papers says, a pleasant time was had by all. The guy which had the best time, though, was G. Everhard Carrington, which did nothin' but talk to Tornado Eagan's sister from the time she come in till he blew. I heard him say somethin' about "Wednesday night at eight," and he dropped his hat twice on the way out, so I figured that he hadn't done himself no harm. After they have all gone, the Tornado asks me who is that guy which has been hangin' around his sister all night, and I says he is regular guy and ready money and let good enough alone. Well, Joe, he says all right if I say so and he'll be back in a minute. I says where is he goin', and he says he wants to go out and hire a guy to blow a bugle in his room at 5 a. m., so's he can tell him to go where the Kaiser is

headed for and then roll over and go to sleep again!

Yours truly,

First Lieutenant EDWARD EDISON HARMON.

(The Pride of the Army.)

II

Somewheres in Harlem.

DEAR JOE: Well, Joe, I guess over in Germany they are singin' now "Where Is Our Wanderin' Kaiser To-night?" Joe, where that guy and the Crown's Prince can hang out now is past me, because neither of them guys has got any more friends than asthma, and even the squareheads has give them the gate. Joe, I ain't a vindictive, but I hate to see tramps get away clean like that without havin' to suffer for what they done! I'll betcha Pres. Wilson will have them dragged outa Holland, or wherever that joint is they beat it to, and make 'em stand trial like any other murderer. Oh, boy!!! — I bet seats on the jury will sell at a million the each, hey, Joe?

Joe, I must tell you the finish of the romantical affair of G. Everhard Carrington

and Tornado Eagan's sister. Little did I know what I started when I throwed them across each other's paths. Also, this here will show you that you can't never judge nothin' by appearances. I'll bet the guy which found the first pineapple never dreamed it could be eat.

Well, G. Everhard begin comin' up two nights a week with flowers and candy, Joe, and then three nights a week, and fin'ly him and eight o'clock was the same thing every night at my flat. Joe, the Tornado's sister was like another person, and as happy as a guy fannin' Ty Cobb with the bags loaded. Joe, when a woman starts hummin' songs around eight in the mornin' they is somethin' the matter, take it from a old veteran married man!

After a while I commenced to think had I done the right thing, Joe, because it was takin' on a serious look, and I didn't know if it was O. K. to let Tornado Eagan's sister wed a guy which for all I knowed was too

yellah to join the army whilst the brawl in Europe was goin' on. They was no tellin' what he would do in the future, and I've knowed Mary Eagan ever since I could pronounce her name right. I thought it over many a day and fin'ly I decided we would have a showdown and be done with it! Then, again, Joe, I had a sneakin' idea he was stuck on Jeanne, because he was always makin' bows and pullin' chairs for her and talkin' to her in French, and what do I know what he's sayin', and etc? Joe, they ain't enough jealousy in me to cover a gnat's eye, but you ain't never seen Jeanne!

Well, I went right down to G. Everhard's office, and you know they ain't no beatin' about the bushes goes with me. Without even claimin' it was a nice day or the like, Joe, I spoke right up and says I thought he was payin' a little too much attention to Jeanne. I watched him with that deadly cold stare for which I am famous.

I had a sneakin' idea he was stuck on Jeanne, because he was always makin' bows and pullin' chairs for her and talkin' to her in French. *See page* 252

Joe, he gazes at me for a minute, and then he jumps up and laughs that kid laugh of his.

"Why, my dear fellow," he says, slappin' me on the back, "how silly! Your wife is one of the most charming women I've ever met, and I want to congratulate you every time I see you. I don't blame you for being — er — jealous, not at all. But you're all muddled up! Mrs. Harmon has merely been kind enough to lend me some assistance in the biggest undertaking I've ever tackled. Besides," he breaks off, shakin' me, "I'm practically a married man myself!"

Joe, I pushed him back against the wall.

"Practically married?" I hollers. "Then what do you mean, you big stiff, by lettin' Mary Eagan think that —"

"Isn't it great?" he cuts me off. "She's going to marry me!"

Well, Joe, I got it then! I felt like a big boob and wished I had kept outa other peo-

ple's business. I stood there for a minute without sayin' a word, but I was takin' G. Everhard in. He looked mighty fine standin' there with that clean young face of his and them shoulders, and the like, and then I realized what a white man he was not to let the fact that Mary was crippled stand in the way. Joe, it was big stuff, and I apologized till I run outa wind.

"That's all right!" he says. "And — we're going to have Mary made well again, too. I've got the biggest specialist in the country coming to see her to-morrow, and if there's a chance —" He stops, Joe, and his voice kinda breaks. "Well," he goes on —"well, even if there *isn't,* what does it matter to us?"

I apologized again, Joe.

Still and all, they was one thing stuck in my dome. Why hadn't this bird gone to the front for his country? I wanted the reason, and I come out with it so's to get

it off my chest. Joe, he grinned again.

"Harmon," he says, "do you remember that I was with my father when he was killed in that railroad accident?" He ain't laughin' now and they's a odd look in his eyes.

"No," I says, "to be level with you, I don't."

"Well," he says, "to be level with you, I was!" He pulls up his trouser leg. "Look at that," he says. "That's why the army wouldn't have me!"

Joe, I liked to fell through the floor. He's got a artificial leg from the knee down!

I apologized again, and in order to bust a embarrassin' silence I says: "Well, that's tough!"

"Tough?" he hollers. "Tough, nothing! I thought it was when I couldn't enlist, but not now. I think it's great — I never would have won Mary over her own sensitiveness, if it wasn't for that!"

Joe, a guy in love is a peculiar thing, hey? I hope they get along all right.

Yours truly,

First Lieutenant EDWARD EDISON HARMON (The Modern Cupid.)

P. S.— Joe, the specialist surgeon thinks he can make Mary as good as new, and I suppose them kids will never thank me for what I done for them. Such is life, hey, Joe?

SEVENTH INNING

JUST LIKE NEW!

I

Opposite Brooklyn, N. Y.

DEAR JOE: Well, Joe, I see by your last letter that you have fin'ly got to France, and what good is that when the war's all over and the toughest thing you'll go up against is the language? The French language made everything but the Cuteys quit, but maybe they talk like me and you now and only used that weird chatter like *"Bonjour, mon chère, comment allez-vous,"* and etc., whilst the war was bein' had. If they was still usin' the language they did when I was over there, Joe, you would die of thirst in a restaurant even if you showed the waiter a photo of Niagara Falls to explain what you wanted.

Joe, Pres. Wilson has left us flat for the time bein' and gone over to help the other pallbearers at Germany's funeral. Joe, they is a lot of soreheads over here which prob'ly wanted to make the trip themselves and which claims a president's place is in the dome (of the Capitol). Well, Joe, I don't know if Pres. Wilson should of gone or not, and at that I'm willin' to keep things quiet for him over here whilst he's away, not that he asked me, but then when a man's makin' a trip he's always busy with packin' and etc. I *do* know, however, that he is president of the U. S., and whatever he does I'll stand back of just like we done in France. Them knockers make me laugh, and I bet they think Pres. Wilson is layin' awake night worryin' because they was against the trip, hey? Why, Joe, he won't know half them guys is on earth — not till 1920 anyways!

I ain't got my discharge yet, Joe, so you can see the Alleys is takin' no chances of

lettin' me outa the army, even though peace has been declared. You know how it is, Joe, if Pershing gimme my discharge, Italy or Belgium or the like might rise up on their hind legs and yell murder, claimin' we was gettin' careless. So I guess I'll be in uneyform till the Kaiser has come from the embalmers, at least.

Joe, who do you think I met on Broadway the other day? No less than Daisy Gertner, which, if it hadn't of been for Germany, I would like as not of wed in cold blood. Before I went to France she looked the same to me as $750 a week would look to a shippin' clerk, but after I seen Jeanne — oh, boy!!! Joe, they is two kinds of females, Jeanne and women — get me? If I was at the Kaiser's trial, I would put in a good word for him on account of him bein' the cause of me meetin' this knockout which smiles across the breakfast table at me every mornin' and makes me forget whether I'm eatin' eggs or playin' pinochle.

I would ask them to have the Kaiser shot with a rifle instead of a machine gun, anyways.

Well, Joe, the war certainly made a awful change in Daisy, and she has growed fat and is far from a sensational looker. For the sake of olden times gone by, I says hello to her, and she was as surprised as the Crown's Prince after the marines landed. After we have says it's a nice day without gettin' into no argument over it, they was quite a pause because I don't wanna dynamite her heart by tellin' her I was wed. I know how horribly the poor girl must feel when I do not dash up and wildly kiss her, because maybe I had allowed her to have hopes, when I was king of the baseball diamond. I'm thinkin' whether it is wise to mention the thing at all, because she might let forth a hysterical screech and faint dead in my arms and a crowd would rush up, prob'ly thinkin' we both had a bun on, when she says:

"Well, Ed, I certainly am glad to see you again. You look as fine as pulverized sugar! Why didn't you send me a post card? You must come up and see us some time. You know I been married since September 8, 1917, and my husband is well-to-do and rich. We got a swell auto and we'll take you for a ride some day. You must be lonesome, bein' away so long — hey?"

Joe, can you beat that? They is nothin' more unreliable than a woman, outside of the weather forecast, hey? Here I am wastin' my time and honest-hearted sympathy on a dame which took up matrimony the day I sailed for France and maybe forever. Well, Joe, I throwed all sympathy to the winds at that and told her I had a wife instead of a wealthy husband and a baby instead of a automobile, and if I was lonesome so was a Fifth Avenue traffic cop from 5 to 6 p. m. Whilst doin' this, Joe, I used the dignity of a police-court judge the first time he's called "your honor," and

with a cold and sarcastical stare Daisy walked away.

I am glad I never give her no ring, hey, Joe?

Well, Joe, the day I met Daisy seemed to be my meetin' day, and in another block I have run into no less than Mac, which caused me and baseball to part on account of me hittin' a brief pitchin' slump and failin' to beat only Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, St. Louis, and Brooklyn. Joe, he was as glad to see me as I was to see the Statue of Liberty on the way back, and nothin' will do but he must drag me in the Knickerbocker, where we get a table far from the crowds and etc. A year ago, Joe, we would of prob'ly bellered for a couple of seidels of Scotch or the like, but now it's different. On account of me havin' my uneyform on, the barbers is even afraid to put bay rum on my hair at the end of a perfect shave, because it's against the law to serve a soldier with a por-

tion of alcohol. So we are forced to put up with a siphon of seltzer and two glasses. Joe, I would rather have a uneyform on than a bun on, so I should be annoyed, hey?

After Mac has praised me up till I am dizzy, Joe, and wonderin' if I am really as great as all that why should I bother talkin' to anybody, let alone Mac, he commences to talk about the baseball situation. Well, Joe, you know I ain't no more interested in that than the Kaiser is in the peace conference, so I plucked up my ears like a rabbit, only with more sense, when Mac says they's a great chance of baseball comin' back again next year. He hems and haws back and forth for a minute, Joe, and I can see they's somethin' on his mind besides the check the waiter will slip him, and fin'ly he gets up his nerve and comes right out and asks me would I like to come back to the club again. Well, I ain't no dummy, Joe, and I knowed when he brung me in there what was comin' off, and I was ready for

him. The second I got over my surprise, I says I would like to come back all right only I have got to get a great deal more sugar than they ever gimme before, and only be pitched once a week, and then only if the crowd is 20,000 to 35,000 of my frenzied admirers.

Well, Joe, he says he wasn't thinkin' so much about the pitchin' end of it, and once a week is all right to him, and it was his idea anyways to keep me outa the box as much as possible. Joe, I smelled a rat and I says what does he mean by that, and he chokes on his soda and says he means he wants to gimme all the rest he can, because I must be tired after my labors in France. Well, I says he oughta see me pitchin' inshoots and the like at the squareheads with grenades, and he says I must of been a wonder at it, because I had the greatest bean ball he ever seen, and remember the day I hit three of the Cubs in one innin' and one of 'em was sittin' in the dugout when he got

it. Can you beat that guy, Joe? Rememberin' that, when whilst he was at it he could just as well of remembered the day I shut out Boston for a innin' and a half and would of gone further with it only they went crazy and could of hit balls before I pitched 'em even.

Joe, I says if I was good enough to beat the Germans, I oughta be good enough to pitch again, and he says they's somethin' in that, but he's figurin' on sendin' me against the National League, and not the Germans, and he's afraid after facin' the squareheads I'm so used to seein' guys runnin' that I'll let everybody get a hit so's they can dash around the bases. Well, I says never mind what I'm libel to do now, how about before I ever seen any Germans, and he says they was little difference, except that I used to make 'em all *walk* then.

Well, Joe, so this here won't wind up by bein' a novel, I'll tell you what the finish was. Mac wants me to sign a contract or

a summons or a dispossess notice or somethin' which says that I agree to play with Mac's team next year, provided they is either of 'em come to pass. Well, I says that as long as I have wrote all these letters to you I don't see no harm in wastin' what little ink it would take to put my name down, only I am famous now, not to say married, and on account of that I got to have a salary which will guarantee me livin' in style in case I don't get no tips. Joe, he says how much is that, and I says $7,000, and he says that's fine, only he don't wanna sign me up for the rest of my life, and how much do I want a year? Well, Joe, I says either I get $7,000 a year or nothin', because they is plenty of clubs which is insane to get me and would be willin' to pay that much as a bonus.

Joe, in less than no time, or two hours and a half to be exact, I have signed up for $5,000 a year with $1,000 bonus, and Mac says when do I expect the bonus?

"They's no time like the present!" I says.

"If you get any thousand bucks outa me before you even put on a baseball uney-form," he sneers, "I'll go and spend the rest of my days in a lunatic asylum!"

"Then the best thing for you to do now," I says, "is call one of 'em up and have 'em reserve a room for you, or else throw away that contract. One or the other's gotta happen."

Well, Joe, I had practically no trouble in convincin' him that I oughta get that bonus in advance, and four hours later he has agreed to gimme five hundred bucks cash and a I. O. U. for five hundred more, and all is settled.

Joe, I ain't said a word to Jeanne about the thing, because I wanna surprise her when I walk out on the diamond next April, and the papers is full of my pictures and etc., and thousands of cheerin' fans is screamin' my name, and I let the first three

walk and fan the next three with the bags loaded, and the crowd goes wild.

Well, Joe, besides Jeanne they is five other guys which would die of surprise if I done that. They are Mac, the three guys I fan, and

Yours truly,

First Lieutenant EDWARD EDISON HARMON.

II

Somewheres in New York.

DEAR JOE: Well, Joe, since last I got my fingers full of ink I have had some wonderful adventures, blowed money like a guy runnin' for alderman on the reform ticket, and am now keepin' a automobile. I have got a bus which will go seven miles if you only hold a gasoline *sign* in front of it, is easier on tires than a miser is on a five-dollar bill, and looks so good to the naked eye that the garages is willin' to pay *me* if I'll only keep the car there so's they can use it as a decoy for business. Joe, it's a 1919 Elegant Eight, $2,000 f. o. b. Amsterdam Avenue, and when it's standin' by the curb it looks like that was the price of the license plates alone. Joe, I got it for nothin', and so far it has only set me back $100 for up-

keep, and I got it nearly a week. It wouldn't of cost me a cent only I ain't used to readin' the speedometer yet, and them motorcycle cops is on the job day and night. The last one told the judge I had turned Riverside Drive into a race track and made acrobats outa the passers-by — the big stiff!

No doubt, Joe, you will be anxious to know how I come to be a automobile fiend when for all you know I ain't ever even seen a picture of Barney Oldfield. Well, Joe, it ain't exactly my fault. I had a chance to catch either that or the Spanish Influence, and I got the wrong one. With the Spanish Influence all you can lose is your own life, but with a auto, Joe, you got a chance to take a few other guys with you — not that I have hit nobody of any account yet.

After I left Mac that day with the five hundred berries in my kick I started back to my flat whistlin' a little tune I picked up in France and feelin' at peace with all

the world, as the guy says. Well, Joe, I commence to think what will I get Jeanne for Xmas and also what will she get me, not red ties or socks I hope, and then I think that as long as this is the first Xmas we been together I will get her somethin' worth while and also worth about $100. Joe, I don't wanna buy her no shirt waists, silk stockin's, patent washin' machines, or the like, because I can do that any time, and on Xmas the women expect somethin' outa the ordinary, the same as you do. Joe, right here I wanna tell you of a thing which always hands me a laugh, and that is the advertisements which is in the papers around Xmas time. Joe, they is pictures of swell-lookin' dames openin' packages containin' a trick fryin' pan or the like, and they got grins on their faces from here to Denver like they was gettin' a million dollars in nickels, and underneath it says: "Give Her What She Wants. Make Her Xmas Happy with a De Luxe Fryin' Pan — No

Food Can Touch It!" or something like that. Now, Joe, you know as well as I do that if you was to walk in to your wife or the like on Xmas mornin' with any such kitchen gift as that she would prob'ly no doubt bust it over your head or, if refined, would at least be off you for life. At Xmas a woman looks for diamonds and etc., and not no "Mother's Delight Washin' Machine" or trick fryin' pans, and you know it, and them ads is the nearest rival to Chaplin I seen for some time.

Well, Joe, I happen to be passin' one of them auto places, and that reminds me of Daisy Gertner claimin' her husband had one, and I ain't immune to jealousy, only havin' been inoculated for typhoid and the like whilst in France, so I stopped to look in the window. They is some swell-lookin' cars there, and I'm wishin' I had been born rich instead of handsome, when can you imagine my surprise at seein' a sign which says the followin':

One Dozen Slightly Used Latest Model Cars
Every Known Make and Others
$500 each to-day only
JUST LIKE NEW!!!

Joe, that five hundred bucks I had grabbed from Mac almost leaped right outa my pocket then and there, and it was with the greatest difficulty that I restrained myself from dashin' through the window and be done with it, with $250 in each hand. Then I figured it might be a plant and the guy which run the store had seen Mac gimme that money and rushed right out and had that sign printed. Still and all, Joe, you know I am a close buyer and would give a druggist a argument over the price of a two-cent stamp, and after five minutes of lookin' them cars over, I fell and marched boldly into the store.

Oh, boy!!!

Some day, Joe, you may grab yourself off a bank roll, not that I think you'll ever make Morgan bite his nails with rage, but

you may at least get to where you can afford a auto like any head bookkeeper or delicatessen clerk can do if he saves his pennies and keeps away from the corners at night. Joe, if you feel you must renounce all family ties and become a auto addict, go to it. It ain't no worse than the drink habit, that's a cinch. But take a little advice from a guy which knows — *never, under no conditions, buy no second-hand car!* Get it new, or ride in the subway!

Alongside of the boob which buys a second-hand auto, Joe, the idiotic simp which rocks the boat, the pinhead that yells "Fire!" in the theatre, and the hick that thinks they's a fortune in bettin' on the races, is shrewd, wise guys. The reason they ain't more people in the game of sellin' used cars is because the salesmen laughs themselves to death every time they sell one. Show me the bird which has bought himself a second-hand car, and the first week

me and him is pals I'll sell him the Woolworth Buildin', Brooklyn Bridge, and Central Park, and then leave orders to have him kept away from my door so's he won't try to buy the East River off of me. Usually you can buy a five-year-old car which cost $3,000 new for about $300. Joe, if they give it to you for nothin' and throwed in a thousand bucks for you to tow it away from the place, you'd be gyppin' yourself. Before you get three blocks from the joint that turned it loose you'll bust $231.56 worth of parts, not countin' blow-outs. So, Joseph, old thing, as we say in Piccadilly Circus, lay off the second-hand car yeggs. A brand-new, right-from-the-factory auto of any first-class make is a joy forever, as the guy says, but a second-hand car is annoy forever or till you get another sucker.

Well, Joe, they was one car in this joint I walked into which had a $500 sign on it, and, as far as I could see, they was $800 worth of paint on the mudguards alone. It

was what is knowed to the trade as a limousine, and, speakin' of size, a freight car would look like a roller skate alongside of it. The minute I get near it a guy which looked more like a hawk than anything else is by my side like magic.

"Aha!" he says, rubbin' his hands together, "just back from the front, eh? Well, I certainly am glad to see one of our brave boys in blue. Ain't that car a beaut?"

"I didn't fight in the Civil War," I says. "I was in this one. They don't have boys in *blue* any more. You wanna read the newspapers now and then."

"No offense, Major," he says, with what he prob'ly thought was a smile. "What'll it be — a tourin' car, sedan, landaulet, roadster, limousine, or what?"

"How much is this baby here?" I says, pointin' to the limousine.

"Ah!" he says, rubbin' his hands again.

"I can see you know somethin' about them boilers when you look at 'em. It's a outrage to sell that car as second-hand; why, it's hardly a week from the factory. That's a twin six Fierce-Barrow, and you know what them is! Look at them tires, look —"

"The price!" I says.

"We're almost givin' it away," he says. "Eleven hundred and fifty is what I gotta get for it, and then I only make forty-six cents profit!"

"You gotta sign out in the window which claims these cars is all five hundred the each," I says.

"Oh," he laughs, "I don't go by that! Why, I wouldn't take five hundred for the tires alone on this job here. Look at —"

"So long!" I says.

He nails me at the door.

"For a soldier it's different," he says. "Gimme a thousand bucks cash and roll out with the car."

"Git your hand off my arm!" I says.

"At nine hundred and fifty," he groans, "I'm gyppin' myself. Take it!"

"I'll be back in a hour," I says. "Consider it sold."

"Fine!" he says. "But I gotta have a deposit, not that I don't think you'll come back. The minute you leave they's libel to be fifty guys rush in here which would gimme —"

"How much deposit do you want?" I says.

"A thousand will hold it," he tells me, "and —"

"A thousand bucks deposit!" I hollers. "And the whole thing's only nine-fifty, hey?"

"You're right," he says. "My mistake — I could hardly believe I was lettin' it go that cheap. I don't belong in this business; I ain't hard-hearted enough to make no money. Well, let me have nine-twenty-five, then, and you can gimme the other

twenty-five when you come back to get the car. You look honest, and I'll take a chance on you comin' back."

Joe, them auto salesmen is reckless, hey? I'm supposed to slip this bird $925 and get nothin', and he's takin' a chance on me comin' back! I argued with him a hour and fin'ly give him $100. I got seven receipts.

Well, Joe, my next step was to break the glad tidin's to Jeanne. As long as I was about to become a auto owner I thought I might as well break in immediately, so I took a taxi up to the flat. The fact that I was practically a brother member of the auto drivers' lodge meant nothin' in this chauffeur's young life. He charged me a buck and sneered when I give him a dime for his family.

Jeanne is sittin' in the parlor with my baby in her arms when I bust into the room.

"Honey," I says, "can you stand a shock?"

Joe, she gets pale and grabs my baby like they was a rumor somebody was gonna steal it.

"*Mon Dieu!*" she says. "Is it, then, that you return to my France?"

"Don't be always hopin' for the worst," I says. "No! I got a limousine."

"*Viola!*" she says, a shade and a half paler. "What would you? It might bite little Weelson!"

Oh, boy!!

"Are you tryin' to kid me?" I says. "What d'ye mean it might bite the baby — a limousine is a automobile!"

She jumped up so quick, Joe, that any other baby but mine would of fall on the floor.

"*Vous êtes charmante!*" she says after we have enjoyed a kiss. "Always you do of the something magnificent for little Jeanne. Ah, *mon chèri,* some of those day you will be a great man!"

"*Mon Dieu!*" she says. "Is it, then, that you return to my France?" *See page* 282

"Some of those day?" I says. "What's the matter with me right now?"

"But by the Joves you are not wrong!" she admits with a laugh.

"Get all dolled up," I says. "I'll be back in no time with your auto. Santa Claus has gave it to you for Xmas."

At that, Joe, they is a fresh demonstration and we was half a hour by the clock sayin' good-by.

I blowed back into this second-hand auto joint and dragged that salesman away from a coupla guys which wanted to buy two used motorcycles and a radiator and turn 'em into a sight-seein' bus.

"Yes, sir!" he says. "Can I show you a car?"

"Yeh," I says, "you can show me mine. Have you forgot me already? I was in here a while ago and give you a hundred bucks deposit on a limousine. I fin'ly managed to borreh the other eight-fifty, and I'm all set to roll up Broadway."

"Oh, yes," he says. "Well, that's too bad. I sold that limousine not a minute ago!"

"You sold it!" I yells. "After me payin' you a deposit on it?"

"My boy," he says, "I see you don't know the used-car game. Anything goes in love, war, chicken croquettes, and the second-hand auto business. It's a tough game — some days a man can't lay up a thousand bucks. We gotta get it quick. Your money is safe. If it ain't, my bank must of failed in the last half hour. I'll give you full value for what you paid. Now, how would a tourin' car hit you?"

"Prob'ly in the neck," I says. "My parents would die of shame if they knowed I was as big a sucker as this. I am now convinced that I'm back in New York. Drag out this car and be done with it!"

"I got just the thing for you," he says. "You shouldn't of got a limousine anyways. That's all closed up, and what

good's that? You wanna have people see who owns the car, don't you? Sure! Now here's a peach of a boiler. It's only six years old and just like new. This here's a 1912 six-cylinder Futz and *you* know what them is! The man that sold me this left heart-broken, but he hadda give it up to get out his diamonds or the like. The entire car is non-skid!"

"I thought only tires was non-skid," I says.

"I see you're a old hand at the game," he says. "Well, this is somethin' new in autos. In 1912 the Futz people discovered a process of makin' a entire car non-skid, regardless of what kind of tires is on it. They was some trouble over the patent, and this is one of the few they made."

"I suppose you don't even need tires with this car, hey?" I says.

"I see you're addicted to sarcasm," he says. "But, strangely enough, what you said is true. You won't have to buy a inch

of rubber, if you take this car, for a year at least. Them tires has only been run 28,000 miles — I think the left front one has only gone 27,000 — practically right from the factory. Just listen to this motor."

Well, Joe, with that he calls over a mechanic. This guy had on a pair of overalls which looked like he did nothin' but oil locomotives since the day he was born. He's got two dollars' worth of prime grease on his face.

"Here, Frank," says the salesman, "turn this one over for me!"

"So you fin'ly got rid of the old tin can, hey?" remarks Frank.

"Shut up!" hisses the salesman, pushin' him around to the front of the car. He then turns back to me. "The boys is all so fond of this car around here," he says, "that they hate to see it go."

Well, Joe, Frank cranks up this thing, whilst the salesman steps inside and monkeys around with a lot of buttons and the

like. Neither of them had no success for about twenty minutes and everybody else in the store got around and advice was as free as snowballs at the North Pole. Suddenly, Joe, they is a horrible explosion and Frank falls away about ten feet, yellin' and holdin' his arm. From inside of the hood of this car comes noises that would of made the Battle of the Marne sound like a chess tourney in a deaf and dumb asylum.

"Ah!" says the salesman, leapin' lightly outa the car and rubbin' them hands of his. Joe, he had to bawl in my ear to be heard over the noise which was comin' outa that hood. "She runs pretty smooth, hey?" he hollers. "Just listen to that hittin' on six. You'd hardly know they was a motor in it at all!"

By this time Frank has recovered. "You big fathead!" he yells at the salesman. "What d'ye mean by advancin' that spark when I'm startin' this wash boiler on mag? D'ye wanna kill me?"

Joe, the salesman looked like he'd like to, but instead he grabs him by the arm.

"Here!" he says. "Go wash up. They's a chance for you to pick up a coupla dollars. This gentleman here will wanna be broke in." He turns to me. "And now that you're satisfied," he says, "let me have the rest of the money and we'll clean the whole thing up. I'm losing money, but it's a quick turnover and I'd do anything for a soldier!"

Joe, I must of been in a trance or somethin', because I handed over the dough like he told me and he didn't even have a gun. He says that Frank will take me out in my car and show me everything and not to tip him over twenty dollars. I says I wouldn't.

By dumb luck, Frank gets this bus outside of the place on the street and whilst the motor wasn't as noisy as it was in the store, it was loud enough to attract the attention of a lot of taxi drivers which wants

to know where's the sucker which fell for that car. It keeps Frank busy hollerin', " Psst — keep quiet, will you? " at 'em and pointin' to me.

Once this thing got goin', Joe, it wasn't so bad, and as we roll up Broadway and I'm sittin' at my ease, I'm thinkin' well, who would of thought that the time would come when I'd own my own auto and the war has certainly made many changes, hey, Joe? Well, Frank says where do I wanna go, and I says drive to Martens & Jachens and I will pick up the gang whilst I am at it. Joe, with that he immediately drives me and the car into a garage, and I says what's the idea, and he says we gotta have gasoline. The minute we get inside, him and a friend exchanges greetin's and the friend asks him where he got such a terrible boiler as my car. Frank again says, " Psst — keep quiet! " and then he tells me that as long as I am there I might as well get some oil also and says all right

how much is it and him and his friend goes off in a corner for a conference. Well, Joe, I seen I was due to be gypped, and I hollers out that no matter what indemnity they arrive at, five bucks is the limit and the guy in the garage hands me a bill for $4.90, and says he will sell me a tire for the left rear wheel which needs it for $56.60. At that I grabbed hold of Frank.

"If you don't get me outa here and uptown," I hollers, "not only will I not give you a nickel, but I will make you a free present of the greatest lickin' you ever had in your life!"

"You ain't gonna lick nobody!" snarls the garage guy. "You think because you got a uneyform on that —"

Well, Joe, my patience is at a end and I jumped outa the car and knocked him kickin' in spite of the fact that he had a monkey wrench in one hand and a hammer in the other. I then turned my attention to Frank, but he's in the car.

"Boss," he says, "you done right, and that guy got off light. I'm here to take you anywheres you wanna go, and whilst I ain't done a thing, I apologize!"

Well, Joe, we fin'ly get up to Martens & Jachens, and I go inside and grab hold of the gang. They all come out and climb in the back of my auto except Eddie Stevens which takes one look at the car and lets forth a sneer.

"I wouldn't get in that boat for a cut of the Libery Loan," he says. "If that thing's a auto, I'm president of Samoa! I bet you don't get two blocks with it."

"Eddie," I says, "I have been obliged to knock one guy kickin' since I got this car. I gotta knock another one, and it might as well be you. Shut up and step inside here, or would you rather be carried in?"

Well, Joe, he got in.

The next stop was in front of my house and Gus, the hall boy, comes runnin' out and opens the door for me to step out like I was

Pres. Wilson or the like, and I hope all the neighbors seen the incident. I thought this big simp Stevens would laugh himself to death. First, I took Jeanne to the window and let her look down at the car. You couldn't see nothin' but the top, and they was a hole in that, but she clapped her hands and says *"Charmant!"* and holds up my baby to look at it. Well, we got downstairs, and the gang made room in the back for my family, and the minute they got in my baby begin to cry. Stevens says he don't blame it for weepin' when it has got to be dragged into a dish pan like my car is, but I quailed him with a glance and he laid off. Joe, we are all ready to set sail, but the car ain't. Frank and Phil Bloom and Stevens and me and a convenient cop took turns crankin' it up, but they was nothin' stirrin'. Fin'ly Frank lets go of the crank and comes over to me lookin' disgusted.

"I won't have no arms left when I get through with this here job!" he says.

"This here tub's all shot to pieces, and you was a sucker if you paid over a dollar for it. Where did you wanna go with these people?"

Joe, I says I just wanted to give 'em a little pleasant ride here and there.

"A little ride *here* is right!" he says, with a sarcastical laugh, "because that's as far as they'll ever get with this boiler. I'll tell you what I'll do. I know a guy which will *tow* you all over New York for fifty bucks — I'll get him, hey?"

"Quit that comedy," I says, "and fix me up so's we can get outa here! D'ye know what's the matter with the car?"

"Sure," he says, "it won't go!"

Eddie Stevens lets forth a idiotic haw-haw and claims he's havin' the time of his life.

"Got any tools?" says Frank. "I might be able to fix it so's we can get it in some garage, anyways. I ain't promisin' nothin', though, with a tin can like this!"

"Everything they gimme when I bought this car must be here," I says. "Take a look yourself. And listen — stop knockin' this car, will you!"

"Huh!" says Frank. "You think *I'm* a knocker, hey? Wait till you hear the motor!"

Well, Joe, we all gotta get out of the car whilst Frank looks for the tools, and the best he can dig up is a screw-driver handle and a tire-pressure gauge. He crawls underneath the car with them in his hand and potters around for a while, and then he comes out again and claims the differential is all shot to pieces and they is little if any chance of makin' the car move without a new one. His advice is to pay him off and forget about the ride and have somebody tow the car to a garage or a junk pile, accordin' to how much sense I got. Whilst this is goin' on, a passin' taxi chauffeur climbs off of his cab and lifts up the hood of my car. One look is enough.

"I'll get you rollin' for a buck," he says to me.

I can't get the money out fast enough.

With that he twists somethin' here and turns somethin' there and Frank snarls at him and shows his teeth.

"Try her now, Stupid!" says the other guy to Frank.

Frank lets forth another snarl and also a remark about a rat which would crab a man's livin', but at a glance from me he grabs hold of the crank. One turn and the motor's goin'.

"That guy has prob'ly ruined this bus for life," says Frank, climbin' back into the car. "What d'ye wanna let anybody which comes along fool with your car for? I'd of fixed it in five minutes, if you'd of had pliers."

"He got it goin', didn't he?" I says.

His answer was nothin'.

Well, Joe, we all get in again and everything is merry and bright, only noisy, whilst we roll along the street. That motor at-

tracted no more attention as we turn into Fifth Avenue than the Kaiser would, but Frank explains to me that the noise can be stopped for a mere investment of $300, and if I will leave the car in a garage for a few weeks, he'll get a friend of his to do the job right. At this minute, Joe, the car stops dead and we are right opposite the Fifth Avenue Library. We are also in the midst of traffic, and if the guy in back of us hadn't had bumpers on, Joe, I wouldn't of had no rear end left at all.

"Ha!" remarks Frank. "Just what I expected!"

Joe, all the auto horns in the world begins to blow in back of me and four million chauffeurs hollers for me to get outa the way and a traffic cop starts over with fire in his eye and a little book in his hand.

"Git that burlesque on a auto off of Fifth Avenue," says the cop. "What are you guys doin'— advertisin' a soap? What d'ye mean by holdin' up traffic here, hey?"

"It ain't our fault," I says. "The motor —"

"Who's the owner of this here wash-tub?" butts in the cop.

"I am," I says. "And lay off that wash-tub stuff! This here's a —"

"I'm gonna hand you a ticket," says the cop. "It's reckless drivers like you which makes the streets of New York unsafe!"

"How much is the ticket?" I says, seekin' to pacify him.

"It'll be about twenty-five bucks," says the cop, "unless you been up before, which you prob'ly have. This here's a ticket for the traffic court. Be there promptly at nine, so's I don't have to hang around waitin' to make the complaint against you!"

Oh, boy!!!

"Git me outa here!" I hisses in Frank's ear, "or I'll murder you and pay a *thirty* dollar fine!"

Well, Joe, the gang all gets out, and Jeanne and my baby stays in and we roll the

car over to the curb by hand. By this time they is about five hundred people, Joe, which has lost all interest in wherever they was goin' and has stopped to watch what's gonna be done with my car. Advice flies back and forth till the air is thick with it and they is three volunteers under the car with Frank, bangin' away with hammers and the like. Fin'ly they all crawl out, Joe, and one guy says I better be careful because apart from everything else a steerin' knuckle is busted and another guy says they is somethin' gone off the universal. Frank whispers to me to slip them each five bucks for their trouble, and I must of been hypnotized because that's what I done.

"I think she's all right now," says Frank. "It's a good thing you brung along a good mechanic. Git in here now, and we'll try it — tell them other guys to wait a minute."

Joe, I got in with him, and Jeanne and my baby is in the back. Jeanne is peeved at all the attention we are gettin' from the

crowd and to say I am sore is puttin' it mild. A willin' volunteer from the side lines cranks up the car and Zam!!! — by some miracle the motor starts.

Well, Joe, I am now convinced that I should of shot Frank back in the joint where I got the car and be done with it! He steps on somethin', and if three guys in front of us hadn't of been lucky they would all of been buried the next day. We shoot across the street with people yellin' and runnin' after us, and Frank is grabbin' like mad at every button in front of him, and Jeanne lets forth a shriek which could of been heard by her brother in France, and I don't care if he was deaf. Right up on the pavement we go, Joe, scatterin' people right and left, and when Frank had fin'ly regained control of this here so-called automobile, we was halfway up the steps of the Fifth Avenue Library with every cop in New York at our heels and they claim they was two women fainted.

"Holy Mackerel!" says Frank, pale as milk, "it must of slipped outa my hand!"

Well, Joe, by this time they was not only all New York but people from Brooklyn and Yonkers around us, the way it looks to me. Some dame tells her friend that we are movin' pictures actors and I must be no less than Douglas Fairbanks which always does stunts like that and they is four cops tryin' to drag me and Frank off of the seat. One of 'em asks Frank how long he's been drivin' a car, and Frank says this is the first one and he only went to work in the joint where I bought the car that same day and was form'ly a bricklayer by trade. Joe, it took the rest of the cops to keep me off him!

They got the car off of the library steps all right, Joe, and I am pinched and fined $100 and Jeanne is off me for a week, and I sold the car to a junk dealer for $125. I also took a oath that I would never buy another second-hand car or any car as long as I live, and I hope my terrible experience

"Holy Mackerel!" says Frank, pale as milk, "it must of slipped outa my hand!" *See page* 300

will be a warnin' to you, not that you'll ever get enough money to buy no car first, second, or third hand.

Yours truly,
First Lieutenant EDWARD EDISON HARMON.

P. S.— Joe, the Elegant Eight people give me a car for nothin', and all I had to do was get my photo taken in it and sign a reference they wrote sayin' that all my famous letters to you was wrote in one of their cars. They is nothin' like havin' a auto, hey, Joe?

ED.

EIGHTH INNING

HARMONY

I

In the Midst of My Dinin' Room, N. Y.

MY DEAR LA BELLE JOE: (*You can see I have mastered the French language, hey?*)

Well, Joe, I suppose by this time you are pesterin' your captain to death by askin' him nothin' but when will Sec. Baker become convinced that the war is over and turn you loose from the army. Well, Joe, don't be kickin' because you are just as well off over there as you would be here where they ain't a thing doin' but the Spanish Influence which is all the rage just now. Joe, you are lucky you are 3,000 miles from this Spanish Influence, because it works faster than a epileptic riveter tryin' for a bonus. You

don't even get no chance to lie to your friends about how it feels to have it, Joe, because first you say, my what a bad cold I got, and, second, you have got on a dress suit and the undertaker is sayin' shall we cross his hands?

Me and Jeanne and my baby has managed to duck it so far, although it has got my goat to such a extent that whenever either of 'em lets loose a sneeze, I dash madly back and forth for a doctor and them guys won't even take off their hats till they get two bucks at least and they ain't one of 'em ever heard tell of a prescription which costs less than $1.80. So you can see I got my hands full, Joe, and you are lucky to have nothin' to bother you but the bugler.

I have not been give my discharge yet either, Joe, but am daily hopin' for the best as I would like to get in some trainin' before the baseball season starts off and I think this will be the biggest year in the historics of

the game I have did so much to make a success. All I hope is Gen. Pershing don't demand that they send me to Russia to make them Bull Shevekers wish they hadn't bumped off the Czar which wasn't a bad guy at that, but bein' Czar of Russia is a tough job, Joe. I'd sooner be mayor of Connecticut or some place like that and all I'd have to duck would be prohibition and the like, hey?

Joe, them birds is havin' some time in this Russia joint right now, and every day must be like New Year's Eve on Broadway, only you ain't allowed to kill each other over here. Life in what was form'ly Saint's Petersburg, but is now called Pete Rograd, after one of the Czar's favorite infielders, is like a electric fan — one revolution after another, and the undertakin' privileges is bringin' prices that would make Rockefeller leap in front of a Lenox Ave. express. One day a guy is runnin' for President of Russia, and the next day he's runnin' for his life,

and if he does get elected he gets the bum's russia before he can even say I thank you. They call their congress Suicide's Row over there, and the cabinet is made up of guys which is sick of livin' and can't afford carbolic.

Well, Joe, I don't like to brag, but if Pres. Wilson is gettin' peeved at that continuous wild west them guys is havin' over there, I will take over " Jeanne's Roughneck Assassins," that company of mine which drove the Kaiser to Holland, and in ten days them Bull Shevekers will be yellin' for the cops. If the war's department will lend me a coupla marines extry, I'll have Russia as peaceful as Sunday mornin' at the workhouse, after the first night.

Joe, I have had quite a experience since I wrote you last, as is usually the case, because I have more things happen to me than Robinson Crusoe ever did the biggest night he had with the pipe. I have took up dentistry, Joe, that is I am havin' my teeth rebuilt

and etc. for the comin' year which promises to be a busy one for one and all. When I get all through, I'll be able to bite a iron railin' in half, not that I'm liable to wish to and they will be more gold and etc. on view when I let forth a smile than they is in Alaska. The whole job is only gonna cost me $250 which sounds like highway robbery, only the dentist is makin' me a bridge too. You'd think he'd present me with the Brooklyn Bridge for that much dough, hey, Joe?

No doubt you are dyin' with excitement to know how it came about that I gotta monkey with a dentist when I used to have such delightful teeth that it was a pleasure to watch me eat corn on the ear, and people at other tables used to stop their own meal to look. I was a riot on chicken's wings too, Joe, not noisy but pleasin' to the eye. Well, all good things must come to a end, Joe, and here one night a trusted tooth turns traitor on me and exposes its nerve just as I

am bitin' down on a order of pork chops with fried sweet potatoes, tomatoes and coffee or somethin' equally as elegant and, oh, boy!!!! Joe, I thought I would go right through the ceilin' when I bite on that tooth and Jeanne thought I had gone nutty on account of me lettin' forth a yell which must of made Gen. Grant turn over restlessly in his tomb. My baby laughs at me like a wolf, and I remember wishin' he was twenty-four years old instead of twenty-four weeks and in a minute he wouldn't of had nothin' to laugh at. I throwed the chop on the floor and grabbed hold of my jaw like I had heard a rumor they was somebody gonna steal it.

"*Mon Dieu!*" remarks Jeanne, runnin' around the table to me. "What then have we here?"

I give out a horrible moan, Joe, and let it go at that.

"Edouard!" says Jeanne, her eyes gettin' as wide as the prettiest saucers you ever seen.

"You have alarm me. The matter, what is it?"

"Stop argyin' with me!" I says. "They is about ten laborers with red-hot picks tryin' to lay a water main in my tooth. Git somethin' from the medicine chest quick, or you'll be wed to a ravin' maniac in a minute!"

"*Mon* poor Edouard!" she says, losin' valuable time by kissin' me. "Have then the courage. Jeanne will return with the very thing before the another second has arrive."

Well, Joe, I sit there holdin' my achin' jaw, and my baby gets the idea I am makin' faces at it and laughs some more which don't help me a bit and pretty soon Jeanne comes runnin' into the room with a little box. I snatched it from her hands so's I could cram plenty of it into this achin' tooth. Joe, I took one look at the box and if they was any one passin' down the street under our window it ain't my fault if it hit 'em.

It was a box of toothpowder!

"Are you tryin' to kid me," I hollers, "bringin' me toothpowder, when I'm dyin' from the worst toothache a man ever had?"

"But!" stammers Jeanne, backin' away and allowin' them red velvet lips of hers to tremble. "What then have I done? Do you not yell that you have these pain of the tooth and does not the very cover of the box I present you announce it is unequalled for the teeth?"

Well, Joe, what can a guy do when the dame that pulls that is better lookin' than $500 a week? I controlled myself with the greatest of difficulty, grabbed my hat and coat, kissed Jeanne and set sail for a dentist. Before dashin' madly out the door, I kissed my baby which left off laughin' at that and begin to cry.

They must of been a law against dentists in my neighborhood, Joe, because I had to cover about half a mile before I come to one. I rung the bell and a Red's Cross

nurse come to the door. She gimme a distant look.

"Did you wish to see the dentist?" she says, like *she* should worry if I don't.

"No!" I says, with a sarcastical grin which was helped along by the pain in that tooth, "I come here to git my horse shod. Lemme in, will you? — I got a tooth here that's killin' me!"

"The doctor's hours is from 3 to 5," she remarks, ten below zero. "I'll give you a card."

"I can't put the card in my tooth, can I?" I hollers. "Is this the way you people welcomes home the soldiers which gave up their lives for you?"

"Well, *this* ain't your home," she says. "And you haven't gave up *your* life, have you?"

"What do *you* care?" I howls. "It ain't my fault. All the Germans which aimed at me was terrible shots. Lemme in and —"

"How do I know you ever was in France, anyways?" she goes on.

"Say, are we gonna do a vaudyville act here?" I hollers. "Or are you gonna lemme in where I can get some relief? If you had this pain, you'd be yellin' murder!"

"Huh!" she says, settlin' herself comfortably against the door, "you men is all babies. Why, I remember when —"

Well, Joe, at this point the doctor is attracted by the noise and come out just in time to save me from the chair for assassinatin' a nurse in cold blood. He was a little bird with a trick whisker and a pair of glasses as big as the spare tires on a flivver.

"What's all this?" he says.

"Ed Harmon with a toothache!" I bawls. "This here confederate of yours won't let me in."

"Well, well!" he says. "Ah, hum — a soldier, eh? — well, well — ah — Ed Harmon, eh? — well, well,— toothache, eh? — well, well,— ah —"

"Shut up, you little stiff!" I hollers, dancin' around with pain. "You'll get me nutty with that stuff. What d'ye mean well, well? Git this tooth out, will you?"

The nurse begin to grin like a hyena, Joe, and I should of murdered 'em both and be done with it, hey?

"Well, well," says the dentist, edgin' away, "it's not — ah — my regular office hours, but I don't think I should — ah — refuse a soldier."

"I don't either," I says, "if you wanna celebrate your next birthday!"

"Well, come in," he says. "I — ah — well, well — back from France, eh? — well, well — I suppose you're glad to be home again, eh?"

"Git out the tooth!" I yells.

Well, Joe, without another word he leads me into the abattoir where he removes his victims from their teeth and the like, and motions me to sit in a thing which was a steal from the electric chair at Sing Sing,

only they kill you there and be done with it. They is enough hardware layin' around in there to start a saw-mill and the whole place smells like the Germans had pulled off a gas attack three minutes before I come in. The nurse comes and stands in the doorway so's she won't miss nothin'.

"Well, well," says the dentist. "Open your mouth wide. Well, well, you certainly have let them teeth go long enough! They is three cavities on the right side and that left upper bicuspid needs crownin' and —"

Joe, I grabbed up a vase which was standin' there and let forth a enraged yell.

"I'll crown *you* with this in a minute!" I hollers. "Git this tooth out and save that inventory of my mouth till later!"

"Well, well," he says, turnin' to the nurse, "see what a savage effect the war has had on our young men. I'll bet this specimen was mild as milk before he went over the top, eh? Well, well!"

Joe, he turns back to me, jabs a wire in my tooth right on that achin' nerve and grins.

"And did you kill many Germans, eh?" he says.

Well, Joe, I let forth a groan and give myself up to my fate. He takes a ice pick and jabs it in every tooth in my head, includin' four I didn't know I had.

"Well, well," he says, "they is no less than seven cavities on the lower left side of the jaw. Would you like me to put gold inlays in 'em or —"

"Stop 'at chatter and pull the tooth, will you?" I yells.

"It's a question to me," he goes on, pryin' my jaws further apart, "it's a question to me whether them old roots in the back should be extracted or crowned. And — well, well — if here ain't another cavity in the wisdom tooth. This is gonna be a big job. Was you glad when peace was declared?"

Joe, with that he shoves that wire down

on my nerve again, and I let forth a shriek which made the Red's Cross nurse drop a glass of water she was bringin' over. I was just gonna grab up a convenient knife and remove this bird from the life insurance books when he prob'ly seen the look in my eye and bangs my mouth open again.

"There, there," he says, "be patient, be patient. I can see now what's the trouble with you — you got a toothache. It don't take us doctors long to get at the bottom of things once we get a chance for a thorough examination. Now it's really a outrage to pull this tooth when it can be treated and saved. I can take out that nerve and —"

"Pull that tooth!" I bawls, when I get my breath. Joe, I snapped my jaws down so quick that if I'd of been lucky I'd of took off his entire hand.

"Keep the mouth open," he says. "Keep the mouth open. I'll have it out in a jiffy!"

Joe, with that he motions to the Red's

Cross nurse which comes over with somethin' in the nickel-plated line and he shoves it in my mouth to hold my jaws open permanently. Well, there I am sittin' like a alligator which has been captured alive and I got that steel thing in my mouth holdin' it wide open and I couldn't close it, Joe, come what may. This bird fusses around here and there and fin'ly he comes over with a thing which looked like a pair of pliers and a nut cracker in one and he clamps it down over my tooth. Oh, boy!!!! Joe, after what that guy put me through in the pain line, I'll betcha I could get my arm cut off without takin' no ether and eat a sandwich the while with a pleasant grin on my face. Well, this guy give my tooth a yank and they is nothin' stirrin', and he's just gonna give it another one and if he does I got a place all picked out to give him the knee whilst he's bendin' over me, when the door bell rings. The nurse tears herself away from the room, and I can see by the look on her

face that she hates to go when things is gettin' so interestin'. She's back in a minute.

"It's Mister Cohan," she says to the dentist, "from the Gotham Dental Supply Company with that line of forceps you wanted to look at."

"Oh, yes," he says, layin' down the forceps after givin' my tooth a extry jerk for luck. "Tell him I'll be right there. Just one minute, young man," he says to me. "I'll be back at once. Keep your mouth open like that so's I won't lose the position."

Well, Joe, he steps outa the torture chamber and there I am helpless with my mouth pried open so's I can't close it and that there tooth is drivin' me nutty. Joe, the Red's Cross nurse grabs hold of a file and starts to sharpen it on a whetstone at the other end of the room, the while hummin' a tune and the noise of both makes my blood run cold and I can't holler on account of that thing keepin' my jaws open! Well, five minutes comes and goes folleyed by ten and they is

no sign of the dentist and the Red's Cross nurse finds another file and gets to workin' on that.

I have give up hope of ever gazin' on the face of that dentist again, and I'm figurin' he has prob'ly got in a poker game or the like, when I hear him in the next room. Joe, that little stiff is argyin' with the guy from the dental supply house about the price of a pair of forceps, whilst I am sittin' in that chair with my mouth pried open like a human rat trap and sufferin' the agonies of the dam with the boss toothache in the world! He has forgot all about me and left me to my fate and I can hardly get my breath and who could with their mouth open a foot and a half hour? Joe, I am tryin' to attract the Red's Cross nurse attention if she's got any, when I hear the dentist say that he won't pay over a dollar for the forceps if the salesman argues with him another hour and the salesman says he'd just as soon argue as go out in the cold and at that

I turn into a ravin' maniac and snatch that nickel-plated thing outa my mouth with a infuriated yell. Joe, before the Red's Cross nurse can turn a eye-lash I have grabbed up the forceps and fastened 'em on that tooth and give it a yank which like to pull my jaw off and zam!!!! — out comes the tooth and some gum and the like.

Well, Joe, the Red's Cross nurse says, " My Gawd — he has went crazy! " and the dentist rushes in and grabs me by the arm and says he is sorry he forgot about me and don't handle the forceps and which tooth is it and he'll get it right out. Joe, I shoves the tooth I have just pulled right under his nose and says that's the one and if he's a dentist I'm mayor of Calcutta. Well, he gets sore and says what do I mean by usin' his office to study dentistry in and the charge will be one dollar which allows me to keep the tooth.

I was so happy that the pain was all done away with, Joe, that I willin'ly give him

the buck and beat it and I'm carryin' the tooth around now in my pocket as a charm against bad luck and dentists.

I am goin' to another dentist now, Joe, which is more human and the like and he's fixin' up all my teeth so's I'll never have any more toothaches if I live through it, and after lookin' at his bill I can easy believe that, because I won't be able to buy nothin' to eat for a long time and how can you rune your teeth when you don't use 'em, hey, Joe?

Yours truly,

First Lieutenant EDWARD EDISON HARMON.

(The Dentists' Delight)

II

Inside of My Den, N. Y.

DEAR OF THE JOE: (Franco-American English). Well, Joe, I am glad to hear you expect to come back any day now, and I wish I knowed whether you are on your way already or not and if so I wouldn't have to write this letter, because I am far from a pen and ink hound and would rather do kitchen police any day than fool away valuable time with a ink-well. I'm sorry to hear that you bust your ankle fallin' over the steps of a Y. M. C. A. hut, but I warned you about usin' that *vin ordinaire* like it was water and that's a fine way to get wounded in France I must say. I suppose you will come back wearin' a wound stripe on account of that and claim they would of forced the *Croix de Guerre* on you only the guy

which gives 'em away was down with the flu or the like. Not that I mean you're a liar, Joe, but you know you always Hooverized on the truth at that, hey?

I see by page 2 of your letter that France is the greatest place in the world and you wouldn't of missed goin' over there for J. P. Morgan's income tax and we should of got in the war long before we did. Well, Joe, of course not bein' stupid I can see by that you have fin'ly managed to get some dame to gamble her future life with you and her name's prob'ly Marie and she's the greatest girl in the world and has repeatedly said, *"Vous etes charmante!"* to you and you fell for it. Well, Jeanne and me sends our congratulations and hopes everything comes out O. K., but you will have to change the plurality of your habits when you get wed and the most important one is bein' outa work.

I spoke to Mac about signin' you up in case you get back in time, and after we have

both enjoyed a laugh at the idea, he says he will think about it, but you got to be a different feller than you was when the Cubs was keepin' you. You know, Joe, that whilst you showed flashes of class now and then when you wasn't thinkin' of what you was doin', you usually acted when you come to bat as if it was a felony to get a hit and they was diamond scarf-pins give to the guy which struck out the most times in one game. Also, Joe, when you was playin' third, a ball hit at you was good for at least 1 run, because by the time you got your hands on it a paralyzed snail could of gone around the bags backwards pullin' a truck full of pig-iron after it. However, we all make mistakes or they wouldn't be no use for dry cleaners and maybe bein' wed will make a new man outa you.

Well, Joe, I am glad that all the Xmas and New Year's stuff is over with and I don't have to get no more idiotic presents and give ones back that cost real dough.

On account of me not smokin' cigars, Jeanne went out and bought me a elegant humidor which looks like a young safe, and it was full of swell-lookin' cigars and must of cost a small fortune and the first of the month I'll have to pay for it. I says it was as much use to me as a headache and maybe she can trade it for somethin' more practically and she turns on the weeps, so I says never mind, honey, it was just what I wanted, and I figure I can use it to keep my contract with Mac in if nothin' else, hey, Joe?

Well, Joe, I hope you got your present O. K. by now and I likewise trust it meets your approval. I want you to be surprised when you open the package if you didn't get it yet and I don't like to say anything about it, but still I might as well tell you it was a solid 14 karat silk necktie and cost six bucks our money, and was give to me Xmas Eve by Tornado Eagan's sister. I would of wore it, only wait till you see the colors

in it and you will get the answer immediately, but it is good silk and it shows what I think of you when I am willin' to give it up.

Joe, we had a Xmas tree for my baby and he busted all the ornaments the first two hours and tried to eat one of the candles, but, outside of that, everything was fine. We had a tree trimmin' party and the whole gang come up and they must of forgot what they come up to trim, because I run a dead heat with the tree and was set back over twenty bucks by bein' sent out every five minutes for more delicatessen, cigars, wines and the like. The ladies was all there strong, and although they claim they are crazy for prohibition, Joe, they was nobody died of thirst. Well, the furniture was all moved over in corners and Jeanne let the victrola run wild and dancin' was had by one and all except me. You know, Joe, I never was strong for dancin', but Jeanne must of took a course at St. Vitus Academy, because she can dance like Annette Kellerman can

swim. Well, my baby got a whole truckload of presents from the gang and me and Jeanne and etc., so whilst the fox trottin' was at its height I went in the kitchen with Phil Bloom, the honest bookmaker, and me and him got down on the floor and played with the mechanical railroad and the tin soldiers and the like for a hour and I bet we had a better time than anybody. We took the divin' toy submarine, I give my baby, into the bathroom and filled the tub with water and I hit a wooden battleship four times to Phil Bloom's twice and win five bucks from him.

Well, Joe, Jeanne come in and says the toys was give to my baby and not to me and she bets the baby will never see any of his presents, because I will have them all wore out before he gets a chance. At the same time, Joe, she kisses me and says *"Mon petit Edouard!"* and Phil Bloom gets all red in the face and says he was only interested in the mechanical end of the toys and

let's go in with the others before the girl thinks we're both simple.

Joe, I give Jeanne a $250 diamond ring, and it's a peach and so bright you could read a newspaper with it in a coal mine and she is tickled silly. It oughta make me solid for a coupla days anyways, hey? Well, Phil Bloom give me a cane, and I hadn't got him nothin' and I hadda run out in a rainstorm at eleven o'clock that night and buy him a silk shirt and it was all wet when I brung it in, but I says I have had it for a week and had sent it back to have the stripes retouched and it was only ready that night. Eddie Stevens, with that small-time comedy of his, sent me a five-pound box of candy and I sent him sixty cents worth of perfume to get even and he gives the perfume to Jeanne and makes himself solid for life. I lost a dollar on the exchange of gifts with Cutey Miller which give me a three-buck tie and I have already throwed four bucks away on a pair of gloves for

him, but I guess I will take my loss like a man and say nothin'.

I hope you have sent me somethin', Joe, not that I'm askin' for it, but you'd be a fine guy to overlook me at Xmas and what I'd like, even if you have already got me somethin', is a pair of cuff links which will stand engravin'.

Well, Joe, besides all the relatives and friends and etc. which I gotta do a Santy Klaus for at Xmas, they is also the hall boys, telephone operator, ice man, etc., etc., and etc., which gotta be remembered as the penalty for livin' in a New York flat. I give the majority of 'em five bucks the each and got back " Merry Xmas, Mister Harmon," so you can see they is little profit in that. They was one guy though, Joe, which was the same as a fairy godfather to me and he works for the butcher twelve hours a day for twelve bucks a week as a stall and plays the races for a livin'. He'd have more money than Rockefeller to-day if it wasn't

for the fact that now and then a horse will lose a race no matter how much you bet on him to win. I will tell you how I come to meet up with him and what was the result and etc.

Well, Joe, on New Year's Eve I have demobilized our imported maid from the Bronx so's she can go somewheres and have a little excitement for herself, and, by the way, what do I do but run into her at the next table to us at the Follies that night and it costs me sixty bucks for my seats so the guy which was with her couldn't of been no refugee from the almshouse anyways, hey, Joe? Well, the thing is that all day I am answerin' the dumb waiter and the doorbell and etc., myself and fin'ly around two in the afternoon the dum waiter bell rings and I open the door and ask what is it and a hoarse voice comes up the air shaft and claims it's the butcher boy with a goose and etc. for our New Year's dinner. Well, Joe, I says send it up and the voice says all right, but

he is the same boy which has served us all year with the finest of meats, game and the like, and all he got from us for Xmas was a chance to pull the dum waiter up six floors. I says I was out on Xmas Eve, and, if he will come up with the goose in person, I will reward him suitably and, Joe, in five minutes they is a ring at the doorbell. Well, Joe, naturally enough I figured the butcher boy would be a young child of about seventeen or the like, because that's what I did when I was that age and I could of been a real butcher if I'd of stuck to it and the sight of fresh liver didn't make me sick and maybe I'd of been better off if I did, hey?

Well, anyways, I went to the door with the Xmas spirit of good cheer and etc. in my heart and a half dollar in my hand and I open the door and, Joe, there is a guy which was a middle-aged man when Lee surrendered and he shoves the goose at me and says, "Happy New Year's, General!" Well, Joe, I asked him to come in and made

a drawin' room outa the kitchen by entertainin' him there. Joe, I dug a bottle of table claret outa the ice box and he went after it like he had just been rescued from the Sara Dessert and hadn't had a bit of moisture in seven months. Then he commences to whistle and fin'ly he turns around and says to me,

"Well, General, it's a tough life. Twenty years ago when I first come to this country I was just as ignorant as I am today!"

Joe, I put the half buck back in my pocket and give him a five case note and I thought he was gonna pass away on me right then and there. He kissed that bill several times and then he folds it up and goes South with it and says,

"I see you been to France, hey? Well, my son got drafted and would've gone over to France in a minute, only Pershing never got around to his name till the war was over. He's a great boy. He got on a train last

week to go to Chicago, and he didn't have no ticket. Well, sir, the conductor comes around to him and what does my boy do but pull out his draft registration card and offer it to the conductor for his fare. Well, to make a short story long, the conductor refuses to accept the draft card, and my boy gets peeved and says as long as they was goin' to send him to France with that card he don't see why he can't go to Chicago with it anyways!"

"What did the conductor say to that?" I says.

"He throwed him off the train," says the butcher boy with a pleasant smile. "Was that all the claret they was?"

"Yeh!" I says. "So long — don't bang the door when you go out!"

"I won't," he says. "Now listen, Major, you been nice to me and I wanna show you I'm not a stranger to gratitude. You know I am workin' night and day deliverin' orders for S. Mendelowitz & Son, game in season

and meat anyways, 3564 Amsterdam Avenue. Well, sir, I get paid a stipend of twelve dollars a week and yet last week I deposited $300 in the Gotham National Bank!"

"What's the matter?" I says. "Ain't they got no cash register?"

"It ain't that," he says, lookin' all around the kitchen like he was afraid of spies or the like. "Listen — is they anybody here?"

"No," I says.

"Well, you used me right," he goes on. "And I wanna come back. D'ye know how I make all my money?"

"I'll fall," I says. "How?"

"I play the races!" he whispers.

"Well, so long!" I says. "Don't forget about bangin' that door. I know all about you birds which plays the ponies. I been showed through five lunatic asylums here and two in France. I suppose you got the greatest system that was ever heard tell of and the only reason you ain't a millionaire

is because they is only certain days when the bookmakers will take your bets at all, hey?"

"You been readin' my mail," he says. "Listen — I got one for to-morrow hot from the stable and I'll give it to you for nothin'. Put every nickel you can beg, borrow or steal down on this baby, because she could fall down four times after they get away from the post and yet win by four city blocks. She oughta be at least ten to one. It's a crime to take the money! The name of this gold mine is Armenian Annie. She was pulled the last time and run second at six to five a place. I had her for a buck across the board and I clean up!"

"You certainly are a terrible plunger," I says. "I bet you got the books all yellin' for the cops! You clean up with dollar bets at six to five, hey — you must be a second John W. Gates, ain't you?"

"I don't make the noise about my bets that he did," he says, movin' for the door. "Only last Tuesday I caught a eight to five

shot on the nose and I had $1.25 on her. Ten minutes later I win a three to one bet and I'm there with two bucks across the boards. The book yelled murder and I gotta go down this afternoon and collect that one, because they was a guy win ten dollars in the same race and the book hadda pay him first because he was a cop. Don't forget Armenian Annie — she's money from home!"

Well, Joe, before he left I asked him where I could bet, because this horse he gimme is runnin' in the first race at New Orleans and by the time I'd get there the race would be over, not that I had no intention of goin'. He tells me they is a handbook in a cigar store which is right around the corner from me and they will take any amount up to ten dollars and is as honest as the day is long. I says I will be there in half a hour and he says I'll never regret it and beats it after borreyin' a cigarette and tryin' out the claret again.

Well, Joe, he has hardly gone when who should call up but Phil Bloom, the honest bookmaker, and he wants me to come down to the corner and get in a pinochle game. I says I can't because I am actin' maid at present, and then I happen to think about this hot tip I got. Joe, if my life depends on it I can't remember this horse's name which the butcher boy gimme and I asked Phil to read me the menu for the first race at New Orleans the next day and maybe I will recognize it when I hear it. Joe, he says since when am I playin' the races and he certainly sympathizes with Jeanne, but never the less he reads off all the horses names. Joe, they ain't one which sounds like the skate the butcher boy gimme, but they is one called Jeanne D'Arc and of course my wife's name is Jeanne and as long as I got the fever I tells Phil to put me down for twenty bucks on that baby to win. Well, Joe, he laughs and says thanks for the twenty, because, if that hound wins, the

Hudson River will turn into ginger ale the same afternoon and Bryan will come out against prohibition.

Joe, you can well imagine that didn't make me feel none too confident, because Phil Bloom knows more about race horses than Chaplin does about a camera, but I made up my mind if I lost that twenty I would say nothin' because they ain't no man ever beat the races and besides I'd have a chance to come back the next day and get even.

I could hardly control myself all day and was up half the night and about three the next afternoon when the dum waiter bell rings I brush the maid away and answer it myself. This here butcher boy hollers up,

"Well, boss, I couldn't help it. Them things will happen. We should of played her to show. I hope you didn't go too heavy on her, but I was hard hit myself. She cost me exactly $1.75 by runnin' third!"

"I forget that dog's name," I hollers

back. "And I bet twenty bucks on another one in the same race. Who win it, d'ye know?"

"A mud lark named Jeanne D'Arc," he says. "I was told to beware of her too. She —"

"Shut up!" I shrieked down the dum waiter. "What was her price?"

"The ticker says forty to one," he says. "I could of had her too, they gimme her with the other hound, but —"

Joe, I don't know what else he said because I slammed the door shut and grabbin' my hat and coat I set sail for Phil Bloom.

Forty to one and I got twenty berries on her, Joe. Oh, boy!!!! Well, it ain't the first time I win on Jeanne, hey?

Yours truly,

First Lieutenant EDWARD EDISON HARMON.

NINTH INNING

"AS YOU WERE"

I

At the Spring's Trainin' Camp.

DEAR JOE: Well, Joe, no doubt you will be amazed to hear I am already gettin' in shape for the comin' baseball season and limberin' up the old whip so's I can burn 'em over the well known platter when they hurl open the gates at the Polo Grounds. We have only been here a fraction of a week and they has not been much practice as yet, because half the team ain't here and they is nobody to play with but a covey of bushers, which, so far, acts like the first time they ever seen a bat and ball was the day they got off the train here. As usual, Joe, them birds all come recommended as second Hal Chases and duplicates of Ty Cobb and etc., but so far the only resemblance between

them guys and the bushers that I been able to detect is that they all speak the English language and has arms and legs.

Still and all, Joe, they is no use knockin' a man simply because he has done all his ball playin' in a league where the admission to the grandstand and the price of five 2-cent stamps is the same. I was a busher once myself, Joe, only of course not for long, and some day them guys may be as great as I am now, though of course that's the same as sayin' some day the Kaiser may get himself elected for mayor of Paris.

I got a honorable discharge from the U. S. army O. K., and am now as I was before I went across the ragin' fome to save France like a second Joan of Arc, except I am more worldly wise and have a wife, a baby and as many medals as a rabbit has relations. My wound has healed nicely and any life insurance company in the world would stake their license on me as far as my health is concerned. I have got the old uneyform

packed away where my baby can see it when he grows up and realize what his famous father done to save the world and etc., and trim any kid in the neighborhood which lets forth a sarcastical sneer when told the same.

Well, now that it's all over and I am back in civilian's life once again, with a magnificent blue serge suit on which fits me like a eel's skin and twelve bucks worth of silk on my back in the form of a shirt instead of them O. D.'s, I certainly am glad of it. They will be no more war plays and movies where the handsome hero (which beat the draft) saves the whole U. S. army by goin' over the top single-handed with nothin' more than a wrist watch for a weapon and where buck privates comes walkin' in and slaps the Colonel on the back and says, "I think we have win the day again, I ain't sure — I'm waitin' for the mornin' papers," and the like. They won't be no more of them war songs either called, "Lay Off A Soldier's Sweetheart, Treat Him Fair

Whilst He's in France" and "Tell Mother Not to Worry, I Been Give Kitchen Police For Life!" All of them sob ballads and the like get my goat. They is only one popular war song which made any hit with me whilst the big quarrel was goin' on and that was one called "The Star Spangelled Banner." The bird which turned that one out covered it all, hey, Joe?

Well, Joe, Jeanne and my baby is in wonderful shape and both gettin' prettier every day. I left 'em home when I come here to train, because the accommodations is not of the best and the hotel where we are stoppin' is a outright steal from a stable — every time a horse walks past it tries to come into the lobby. They was a cow went by the other day and begin hollerin' "Moo, moo!" the minute it got to the door. I says to the clerk, "That there baby is prob'ly no doubt pagin' a friend of his, which I think has the room next to mine!" Joe, this guy got sore and has been off of me ever since. The

meals is also brutal and the service is the same a guy would expect at the North Pole. All in all, the existence here is as wild as life on a lightship. They was one of the natives got a registered letter at the post office here the other day and him and a friend faint from excitement, and if they ever was a telegram sent here they wouldn't be able to handle the crowds at the city hall.

Joe, by the way, this burg is as dry as the Congressional Record and whilst we are on that subject, no doubt even you have heard by this time that the whole country has decided to cast its bread upon the water and hereafter it's gonna be "grape juice, women and song." After next July, "The lips which touch liquor will have to pay a fine!" as the pote says, and a bartender will be about as useful as a match salesman in Hades. Well, Joe, they ain't no use of me goin' into this thing regardin' whether prohibition is right or wrong, because what *I* think ain't gonna make no difference either

way. They ain't no question though, Joe, that whatever harm this bone dry thing does, it's bound to do a lotta good — if not to us, to our kids and the like. They ain't *no* guy ever got across on *account* of booze and them birds which was partial to private stock and *did* get their names in the incandescents of life, did that in *spite* of booze and not *because* of it!

They say prohibition is gonna throw millions of guys outa work, Joe. Well, how about the guys which *booze* has throwed outa work, hey? Oh, boy! Check 'em up sometime, Joe.

As far as baseball is concerned, the chances are that it'll help the game more than it'll hurt it. They's many a promisin' young kid will be able to devote all his time to hittin' baseballs instead of highballs and get in the habit of talkin' to receivin' tellers instead of bartenders, not that a bartender ain't as good as the next one. Them ale throwers oughta be glad at that for gettin'

a chance to throw their white aprons away, Joe, because at least they won't have to listen to a lot of guys' troubles all day long with nothin' to break it up but the rattle of cracked ice, and also they'll get a chance to find out they is more words in the English language than "What are you gonna have?"

Well, Joe, I ain't Billy Sunday or the like, and you are prob'ly thinkin' the country has gone to the dogs you are so sore now on account of them deletin' your nightly beer that a temperance lecture would only make you fome at the mouth, so I'll lay off. But, Joe, I must say it will be comical next summer to walk into a drug store and split a bottle of Smith's Soothin' Syrup or get reelin' around the places over a coupla nut sundaes, hey?

Joe, this is the first time I have been away from Jeanne and my baby for quite a while and I am as lonesome as a crap shooter at a armless wonders' picnic. It's hard for me

to get used to bein' able to sleep all night without gettin' up from 59 to 60 times to see is they's somebody tryin' to kidnap my baby or is it just yellin' for luck. Also, I miss Jeanne across the breakfast table tryin' to speak English and muffin' it and bawlin' me out in two languages for gettin' cigarette ashes on the floor. Joe, you never realize what a home is till you leave it! I'd give anything right now to come in at eleven o'clock and seek to get away with it by sneakin' in like a toe dancer and then havin' my baby, which has a eye like a eagle even when asleep, wake up and try out his lungs. At this point it is eight to five that Jeanne will come to the door of her room with $200 of this negligee stuff on (I can show you the bills) and lookin' as good as 1912 would look to the Kaiser right now. They is generally a embarrassin' silence and then she lets forth the followin', speakin' at the rate of ten words to the second,

"*Viola!* So you have of the at length

recall you are marry to Jeanne rather than those pinochle *cochoni, oui!* You have wake me, you have wake *le enfant,* everybody you have wake! I shall then go back to the France. I shall take myself there at once. *Parbleu!* Jeanne does not come to that America to be left all alone by herself, *non, non, non, non!"*

My answer to all of this is, "Hello, sweetheart!" folleyed by a idiotic grin.

Well, Joe, then I plant a affectionate kiss on a mouth which is a steal from a rosebud, put out the milk bottles and rock my baby back to sleep and they is peace again till the next night. Joe, I used to think it was terrible to get bawled out for stayin' a coupla minutes after curfew, especially as I been away from the gang so long, but I'll tell the world I'd give anything but my pitchin' arm to hear it right now!

Joe, I get a letter from Jeanne every day and it is half French and on the bottom is a lotta marks which my baby put on and I

can understand that as well as the rest of the letter, because by the time I get the French language eatin' outa my hand Niagara Falls will turn into ginger ale. Anyways, I am writin' her back a coupla letters a day and a half dozen of them souvenir post cards, with a telegram about four in the afternoon, and then, of course, a night letter in the evenin'. Well, Mac says am I practisin' to become a bookkeeper or a ball player and why don't I call my wife up on the 'phone, too, so's she won't have no moan that I'm neglectin' her. Well, I says that's a good idea, and I called her up and the first time she wasn't in, but it set me back $6.25 anyways. Joe, ain't that like a woman to be out when her husband calls up, and why should Jeanne have anywheres to go when I ain't home, hey? Joe, I wasn't no good for nothin' till I fin'ly got her on the 'phone and I blowed ten bucks argyin' with her over where she had went. Accordin' to her claim it was merely to the corner to get some

fresh air, and I suppose that's level, but they is windows in our flat and she could of opened one of them and sat by it, hey?

Well, Joe, we had quite a scare with my baby before I left, but it turned out to be nothin' serious accordin' to the doctor's guess. He begin to yell murder about three o'clock one mornin', and as usual Jeanne wakes me up like I was a soothin' syrup or the like and I go into his room to see what's it all about. Joe, usually when he gets a flash at me that's the same as laudanum and he falls off unconscious again, but this time he took one look and throwed his lungs into high. Well, I closed the windows so's to give the neighbors a chance and I picked him up outa his crib and begin to do a O'Sullivan across the floor with him, the while hummin' "Go to sleep, you little boob!" soft and low. Joe, they is nothin' stirrin' and I'm only human and it's gettin' late and my patience is gettin' ready to leave the flat any minute. Then, to help things along,

Jeanne comes runnin' in and wants to know what I'm doin' to him to make him holler so loud.

"I hit him in the head with a hammer!" I says, very sarcastical. "What d'ye mean, what am I doin' to him? I'm tryin' to make him call it a night so's I can hit the hay, and he can't see into it!"

With that, Joe, she snatches him away from me and gets into this walkin' match herself, singin' somethin' to him in French. Joe, he simply give a sneer at that and went off into a high C that would make a opry singer take carbolic. Joe, the people in the next flat gets enough and begins bangin' on the wall and the people underneath bangs on the floor and the people above bangs on the ceilin'. Jeanne tries everything she can think of, and they is nothin' doin', and we both begin to get scared. She set him down in the crib for a minute and at that he let forth a beller that like to raise the roof and

I immediately grabbed my hat and coat and beat it for a doctor.

Joe, I had no more trouble findin' one at that time of night than I would have findin' service in one of them Paris hotels. All these medicos was closed up for the day and the best I could do after a half hour was to dig up one of them birds which cures you by rubbin' your bones here and there — opticians, I think they call themselves. Then I excavated another guy outa bed and he comes to the door with a nightgown on and yawns and says to give my baby some puppy crackers and he'll be all right and slip him three berries for the night call. Well, Joe, I hollers that my baby ain't no dog and what does he mean give him some puppy crackers and he says, oh, he thought I had come to him about a dog, because he was a vegetarian and didn't treat nothin' but animals and don't yell so loud at him.

Well, Joe, I fin'ly got hold of one guy

which showed some indications of havin' brains, even if a doctor, and he says wait and he'll be down in a minute. Well, I'm nearly crazy thinkin' how my baby is makin' out durin' all this time and in about three-quarters of a hour this bird come down. He says to wait on the steps and he'll go and get his car and I says he don't need no car, because I only live four blocks away and kindly shake it up a little on account of my baby bein' prob'ly at the brink of death. Well, Joe, he says he ain't gonna walk to no calls for no man especially at night, and have patience, the chances are that the baby ain't got nothin' but a trifle croup or maybe a little scarlet fever or influenza, and he'll be walkin' around in a coupla days as good as new. Joe, I says if he can make my baby walk around in a coupla days he must be *some* doctor, because the child ain't never done no walkin' as yet. His answer is nothin', and he beats it for his car.

We fin'ly get back to the house, Joe, and

dash up the stairs on account of the all-night elevator service stoppin' promptly at eleven every night, and when we get in, Jeanne is almost hysterically and my baby is still yellin' murder. The doctor takes him away from Jeanne and looks him over like it was the first one he ever seen and he was dyin' with curiosity and fin'ly he grins and says they ain't nothin' at all the matter with my baby and lend him a pencil and he'll write a prescription for it. (Joe, you can see how them guys works with the druggists, hey?) Well, Jeanne didn't catch what he said and he tells her that the reason my baby is yellin' is because he's gettin' a tooth and you gotta expect a little noise from him till he gets the set. With that, Joe, Jeanne stages a faint and the doctor brings her to and pats her on the shoulder and tells her to go to bed and forget about it as things is now O. K.

Well, this guy put the bee on me for five bucks for labor and after slippin' us a pow-

der all around as a souvenir or the like, he beat it. Joe, I trust they is nothin' the matter with my baby on account of him gettin' only one tooth at a time. At that rate he will have to live on nothin' but soup for years, hey?

Well, I will hereby finish this now, Joe, because I got a all night job starin' me in the face. I got to write a letter to Jeanne.

Yours truly,

ED. HARMON. (*née* First Lieutenant, A. E. F.)

II

At the Spring's Trainin' Camp.

DEAR JOE: Well, Joe, I have brung no less than Jeanne and my baby down here and so far everything is O. K. None of us could bear up under the terrible strain of bein' away from each other, and I told Mac that either they come down here or I quit the team flat, and he says all right go ahead, so I sent for them. He seemed surprised when he seen them and claims I took him up the wrong way, but that ain't causin' me no pangs of worry, Joe, as long as they are here. Joe, you would be surprised, I am like a new man since they come and all the gang is crazy over Jeanne. Joe, they won't let her lift a finger and even Mac was seen helpin' her down the porch of the hotel with the baby carriage no later than yesterday,

can you imagine a thing like that? He keeps kiddin' me all the time about bringin' my family down here at the Spring's Trainin' Camp and says maybe I will want them in the box with me when I pitch, and I says I will see if they is any rules against it and if not I will consider it.

"Well," he says, "ain't you afraid your baby would get hit with some of them singles and two-baggers and homers which you are in the habit of dealin' out when you pitch?"

"They ain't no danger," I says, "because when *I* pitch, them other babies won't never lay a bat on the ball!"

"You're gonna make 'em all walk, hey?" he says.

"Yeh," I says, "I'll make 'em all walk back to the bench!"

I leave it to you, Joe, who got the worst of that. I have got to be a wolf at this comeback thing since I got wed. A man has to be, Joe.

Well, Joe, amongst the boarders at this here so-called hotel is a swell lookin' dame from Boston which come here for her health, accordin' to her own confession. She is very easy on the eyes and her and Jeanne has got to be great friends, callin' each other by their first names and the like and kissin' each other when they meet after a half hour's separation like they hadn't seen each other in ten years, at the least. She claims her name is Sylvia Leighton and me and her is the best of friends, too, only without the kissin' end of it. The whole gang is stuck on her, and she ain't had a excuse in the world to be lonesome ever since we been here. Rube Mullins managed to make a date with her the other day to take her to the movies, and after a hour's argument he trades the date with a newspaper guy which is travellin' with the team, for a write-up in a New York paper sayin' Rube is doin' nothin' but bustin' fences down here, and Mac claims he's the find

of the season. I don't know if it was worth it or not, because Mac told me last night that the nearest Rube will get to New York this season will be Jersey City, and he wouldn't let him in the Polo Grounds with a ticket.

Well, last week, Joe, we had a very romantical affair here on account of this dame and it was just like one of them movin' pictures whilst it lasted. It only goes to show that they is many things happens every day in actual life which is just as good as the movies, only unless you're as big in your own class as Chaplin, Fairbanks and etc. is in theirs, it ain't noticed by this mob.

Well, Joe, they was a new bird blowed into the hotel and grabbed himself off a room and right away he become as welcome as typhoid fever. He was one of them milk-fed college guys which thinks anybody which says "ain't" is a roughneck and they is such a thing as a "bawth." I run into him in the lobby of the hotel the

second day he was here, and he asks me am I Lieutenant Harmon and I pleaded guilty. He then says in a sweet and tremblin' voice,

"I'm awf'lly glad to meet you, lieutenant. My name is J. Halloway Plimpton-Deverson."

"Well," I says, "I can't help it!"

"Naturally," he says, with a grin. "I just wanted to say I've read all about your exploits and I've been simply crazy to meet you!"

"All right!" I says. "You're saved from the madhouse now, ain't you? Is they anything I can do for you?"

"Yes," he says. "I — they — that is — well, they're so few of us here that appear to be congenial and — I — I wonder if you would be good enough to introduce me to that charming young lady who appears to be the companion of your wife."

Joe, I stood there lookin' him right in the eye for a minute without sayin' a word. He was only a coupla inches shorter than

me and fairly well set up except for bein' a little narrow, but it was his face and the layout he was wearin' that convicted him with me. Joe, in the first place, he was entirely *too* good lookin' for any guy. He had nice blonde wavy hair, baby blue eyes, with eyelashes a foot long on the side, a complexion that a chorus girl would give up half a dozen of her limousines for and a set of teeth that blinded the eye when he grinned. With this layout he packed a trick giggle which he let forth after every other word. And the voice, Joe — Oh, boy!!! He was featurin' one of them sport shirts which leaves part of the chest and the neck exposed to the mercy of the elements, a tie so red that I kept listenin' to hear the fire engines comin', a blue coat and white pants. The whole is crowned with a white soft hat turned down all the ways around, so's to keep off the sun and the like.

He fidgets whilst I'm takin' the inventory.

"Ah, hum!" he says, "I trust you will not misunderstand me. I am perfectly — ah — I will show you my credentials, if you have not already heard of me. I am perhaps the foremost designer and color expert on women's gowns in America."

"On which?" I says.

"Women's gowns," he says. "I expect to go to Paris next year with Pacquin."

"What's the matter with startin' tonight?" I says. "I thought dressmakers was women."

"Not all of them," he smiles. "It was I who designed Mrs. Vandermont's Persian peignoir which created such a furor last season."

"I didn't get to see it," I says. "I was too busy last season creatin' a furor of my own with the squareheads. Was *you* over there?"

"Unfortunately I couldn't make my usual trip," he says, "on account of the war."

Oh, boy!!!!

"Well," I says, "it worked the other way with me — that's practically the main reason I went over. I don't see where I get off to introduce you to no young girl. I got to think it over. I'll let you know about it to-morrow."

With that I walked away and left him flat.

Well, I told Jeanne about it, thinkin' it would hand her a laugh. Joe, I know more about astronomy than I do about women, for the minute she hears his name she claps her hands together and says she must meet him right away and maybe he will suggest somethin' new for her summer wardrobe. She claims every woman in the world has heard of this guy and that they is a lot of firms in Paris would give everything but their license to get him. I throwed up my hands at that and left in disgust rather than start a argument and outside I bump into Sylvia Leighton. As I was lookin' for

sympathy, I sprung my story on her, thinkin' they was a chance she might have some sense. I lose another bet, Joe. She listens carefully and then says, "What luck. We must have him to tea!"

What's the use, hey, Joe?

They had that bird to tea all right, but I was absent — drinkin' coffee or the like somewheres else!

Well, Joe, I hope I never get another single if Sylvia Leighton don't fall so hard for this he dressmaker that she like to bust her neck. They was everywhere together from the movies to climbin' the trick mountain which is one of the beauties of this here burg. The other one is the train for New York. They pull off a dance at the hotel here and she and him played partners all night and not even St. Vitus could of had a dance with her, if he'd of been there. The ones they didn't dance, they played out on the porch, where they was everything but electric lights, and Jeanne gets to tellin'

me what a nice match it's gonna make.

Well, Joe, you can imagine how a guy like this bird got over with this gang of ball tossers which was nervous anyhow from the strain of trainin' after several months let down and wanted somethin' to relieve their feelin's on. The fact that he had beat 'em all to it with the fair Sylvia didn't do him no good either, and they rode him to a fare-thee-well. He didn't have no more friends than a toothache and every time he passed to and fro they was some crack made that would make the average guy come at you with a chair, if he figured you too big for his hands. I took no part in the proceed-in's whatsoever, either with him or against him. I believe in live and let live, and went on my merry way tryin' to get in some kinda shape to hurl baseballs for a livin'.

Big Lefty Miller, which sat on the bench half of one season for beatin' up more umpires than his allotment called for, was the worst of the bunch. He had flopped fairly

hard for Sylvia and it come like carbolic to him to see her pairin' up with a guy like J. Halloway Plimpton-Deverson — or any guy, for that matter. He rode this bird day and night, and when he found out about this dressmakin' thing, he went around fomin' at the mouth and mumblin' somethin' about pickin' this other guy up, breakin' him in half and throwin' him away. Like most fatheads, Lefty figured a woman falls into the arms of a bruiser which will beat up the present incumbent. Well, some of 'em do. But they is a lot of cases where a incident of that kind will make the guy which gets the trimmin' stronger than ever with the dame. The whole thing is this, Joe — if they like you, they ain't *nothin'* can happen to you that's gonna make any change.

Well, this here thing had to come to a boil sooner or later and that's what it did. The other day, the whole gang of us is takin' a sun bath outside the hotel, when

Sylvia and J. Plimpton-Deverson comes back from a hike up the mountain, arm in arm. Lefty gets a flash at 'em and growls like a enraged grizzly. They got to pass us to get up on the porch and as they do, Lefty grunts, shoves out his foot and trips this guy, which immediately goes sprawlin' in the dirt. Sylvia had a line on how the boys liked her choice and she gets kinda pale. The gang moves around — it looked interestin'. Lefty stands set for anything Deverson might feel called upon to do. (I know what *I'd* of done, hey, Joe?)

Deverson gets up and brushes off his nice white pants.

"I'm sure I beg your pardon," he says to Lefty, while the rest of us gasps. "Terribly stupid of me. I — I — didn't see your foot."

Oh, boy!!!!

Sylvia looks relieved, but Lefty snarls at him.

"You didn't see my foot, hey?" he sneers.

"I gotcha. You're a expert on colors, hey? Well, I know what the color is — yellah!"

I felt awful sorry for Deverson, Joe. Did you ever feel that way for somebody when a thing like this comes up?

Joe, he stands there for a minute lookin' at Lefty like he didn't quite get it. Then he looks around from one face to another, and somebody laughs. I don't know who it was, but Lefty oughta be off of that guy for life! Joe, Deverson forgets all about Sylvia. He's standin' on the top step of the porch and he just *sprung* off of it like he was doin' a broad jump. He landed so hard on Lefty that they both went down, but Deverson was on his feet like a cat. Sylvia gave a squeal, and we all crowded around, somebody helpin' Lefty up. I took Deverson's beautiful blue coat.

Well, Joe, it was a good scrap while it lasted, but five minutes ain't much. Lefty never had a chance with this bird and might

just as well of been a armless wonder. Deverson stood him off and hooked, jabbed and jolted him all over the lot. He hit him with everything but the pump outside the hotel, and simply cut him to ribbons. This bird was no gang fighter, Joe, he placed every punch like a guy layin' out cards for solitaire. He was a scientist and you know I ain't no tramp myself with my hands, Joe, and it was a rare treat to me to watch him work. Fin'ly, Lefty is staggerin' around punch drunk and castin' his eye about for a soft spot to take a dive on.

"I took up boxing," pants Deverson, "because an operation on my throat, (Slam!) affected my voice to such an extent (Biff!) that I was subjected to abuse and annoyance from just such bruisers as you (Bing!). I was amateur light heavyweight champion for two years (Biff!) and I fail to see why *you* should be difficult to handle (Bang!). You were right about me being a color expert. That's my pro-

fession (Slam!). Your face needs more harmonizing. Now, a dash of red *here* (Slam! — on the nose) and a touch of blue *there* (Biff! — the left eye) makes all the difference in the world. Look at it in the morning!" (Crash!)

Down goes Lefty.

Deverson takes his coat from me and walks up the steps to Sylvia.

"I beg your pardon!" he says.

She says nothin'.

They're engaged.

Yours truly,

ED. HARMON. (The comin' dictator of baseball).

III

On the Way to the Polo Grounds.

DEAR JOE: Well, Joe, this one will have to be very short, because I am writin' it on a train which never seen a spring and must be runnin' on the ties every other mile from the way it's bumpin' along and keepin' my baby awake. I got your letter sayin' you had signed up with the Cincinnati Reds just as we was leavin' here. Well, Joe, I'm sorry you couldn't get on a ball team, but that's better than nothin' provided you are tellin' the truth and are really with any team at all. Not that I think you're a liar, Joe, but you know how you always used to get praised about your imagination. It's tough that you couldn't get with us, but perhaps it's all for the best because, if you was workin' behind me when I was pitchin',

it might be too big of a handicap for even me to overcome.

I guess you won't get no more letters from me for a long while, now, because I'll be too busy pitchin' and the like, but we will no doubt run into each other from time to time — that's if you're tellin' the truth about bein' with the Reds. If not, come and see me at the openin' game in New York. I'll be the nonchalantly guy that's standin' in the box, raisin' my cap repeatedly to the cheers of my frenzied admirers.

Joe, I got off to a start in this burg in a exhibition game we played with the Cubs. As I walked out into the box and looked around at the old familiar crowd in the grandstand and etc. and heard the umpire say, "Batter up!" I thought of all the things that has happened since I was last in the same position. I had been to France and helped win the war and had a wife and baby and all like that — all because Mac had canned me when I give the Cubs eight

runs in one innin' nearly two years ago. Joe, it was a funny thing that here I was up against the same team again, even, startin' life, you might say, all over from where I left off. Joe, I waved my hand at Jeanne and took a long wind-up. Two years ago they got eight runs, hey? was what I thought. Well, I'm another Ed. Harmon now and this time it'll be *different!*

Well, Joe, it was different. They got *nine* runs this time!

Yours truly,

ED. HARMON. (Look for me in the box scores, Joe — so long!)

THE END

BRENTANO'S

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